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JULY 1992

A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

Fidel's Abandoned Isle

by Patrick Symmes

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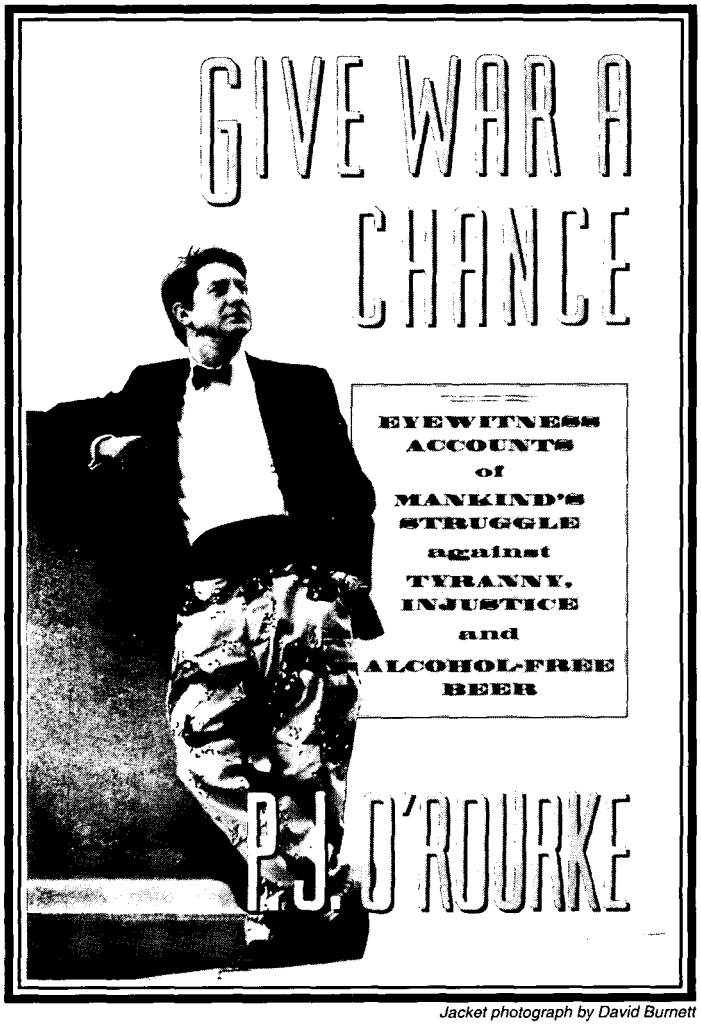
GIVE WAR A CHANCE
EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS of MANKIND'S STRUGGLE against TYRANNY, INJUSTICE and ALCOHOL-FREE BEER
P.J. O'ROURKE

Jacket photograph by David Burnett

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Give War a Chance is available at all fine bookstores. *Parliament of Whores* is now available in paperback from Vintage Books.

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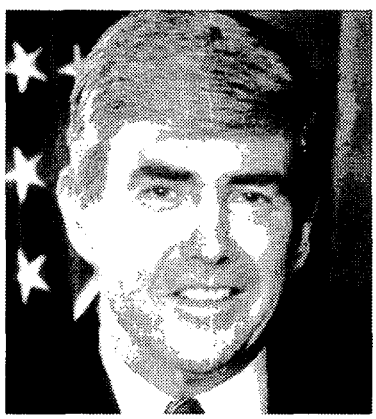

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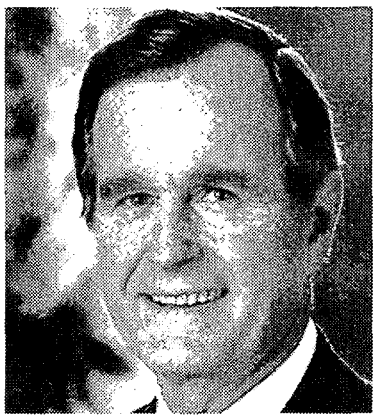

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Soviet-Jewish Migration to Israel

Why do the Arabs fear it and fight it?

There are 2 to 3 million Jews living in the former Soviet Union today. Under the Soviet Communist system, their culture and their religion have been ruthlessly suppressed for decades. Emigration was virtually impossible. Lately, under glasnost and the more enlightened leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin, the gates of emigration have begun to open. Most of the emigrants choose Israel as their destination. All Arabs — and not just the "Palestinians" — are strident in their opposition to this immigration. What motivates them? What is their concern?

What are the facts?

■ Israel was created for a specific purpose: It is the ingathering of Jews from all over the world, especially those who had been subject for centuries to hostility, violence, oppression, ghettoization, and — eventually, the unprecedented disaster of the Holocaust, in which 6 million Jews perished. The yearning for the re-establishment of the Jewish homeland in what came to be called "Palestine" had been unremitting over the centuries. In 1917, the British were in control of Palestine and issued the Balfour Declaration, which called for the establishment of "...a national home for the Jewish people". This Declaration was confirmed by the League of Nations. The concept of Palestine as a Jewish state was further confirmed by the United Nations, which recognized the new-born Jewish state in 1948.

■ During the second World War, many of the millions of Jews that died in the gas chambers of the Nazis could have been saved if they had been allowed into Palestine. The British, however, under the unrelenting threats of the Arabs, buckled under that pressure and effectively throttled Jewish emigration to Israel, thus condemning many to horrible deaths. The situation today is comparable: Under "glasnost" the virulent history-old anti-Semitism of the Russians and the new-found hatreds in the Islamic parts of the former Soviet Union subject the Jewish population to imminent great danger and possible pogroms. Emigration to Israel is the only solution.

■ The Arab world has regarded this exodus with undisguised hostility and has urged the former Soviet Union to stop emigration to Israel altogether. Pretext for this hostility and opposition is the alleged fear that the Soviet-Jewish immigrants will settle in the administered territories, thus threatening the Palestinian inhabitants and their hopes for a future homeland. But, this is a false charge. The Israeli government gives absolutely no incentives to any of the immigrants to move to those areas. Fewer than 1% of all Soviet-Jewish immigrants have moved into the territories.

■ The concern of the Arab states, virtually all of which (with the notable exception of Egypt) consider themselves in a state of war with Israel and which have the destruction of Israel at the very top of their agendas, is not with the "Palestinians". In fact, the "Palestinians" and their aspiration for a homeland are a matter of some indifference to the Arab nations, a pretext for the enmity to Israel. If they were truly concerned about the "Palestinians" and their well-being, they would not have suffered their staying in refugee camps for over forty years, in conditions of utter misery. The real reason is the basic Arab view that the existence of Israel on any land that they think of as "sacred Arab soil" is considered a Western plot against Islam and the Arab world and that the destruction of Israel is a sacred religious duty, which calls for "jihad" (holy war) against the "infidels". Even if Israel could be induced to grant the "Palestinians" their mini-state, it would not change the hostility of the Arab nations one iota. Their aim would still be the destruction of Israel, except that, with a Palestinian state in Israel's heartland, the Arab armies would only be minutes away from Jerusalem, from Tel Aviv, and from the military, industrial, and population centers of the country.

The mass immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel would strengthen Israel. Anything that strengthens Israel is perceived by the Arabs as weakening them and thus making more difficult the planned destruction and dismemberment of the Jewish state. The prospect of Jewish immigration strikes terror in Arab hearts. That explains the continuing acts of terror and the hysterical statements and saber rattlings of the Arabs. It explains Arab pressure on the former Soviet Union to halt this emigration. It explains why the former Soviet Union did until very recently not allow direct flights from and to Israel; it explains threats to blow up commercial aircraft of those countries bordering the former Soviet Union that may permit transshipment of Soviet Jews to Israel. Israel was created to be a refuge and homeland to persecuted Jews anywhere in the world. During World War II, the world stood idly by and did not allow Jews to enter Palestine, which could have saved millions. Nothing like it can be allowed to happen again. Soviet Jews are in imminent danger. They want to leave and go to Israel. Despite Arab frenzied opposition, the world must see to it that nothing happens to slow this exodus.

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Volume 25 Number 7, July 1992
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The American Spectator (ISSN 0148-8414 is published monthly at 2020 N. 14th Street, Suite 750, Arlington, Virginia 22216. Second class postage paid at Arlington, Virginia, and additional mailing offices. One-year subscription is $35. Vol. 25, No. 7. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The American Spectator, P.O. Box 549, Arlington, Virginia 22216-0549.

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ABOUT THIS MONTH

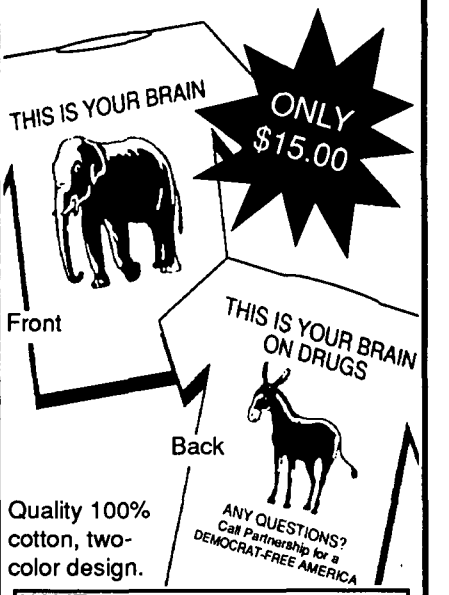
by

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski

IF EVERYONE IS afraid of Ross Perot, why is he so popular? Not waiting to find out, the *New York Times* this spring unleashed a pack of damning stories questioning his sanity, his business practices and ties to Wall Street, and his past dealings with Richard Nixon and other Republicans. It even raised doubts about his military record, quoting several key passages from a letter dredged up by the Associated Press in which 25-year-old Navy Lieutenant Perot asked his congressman for help in receiving an early discharge. Two things bothered him in particular: "I find it unsatisfying to live, work and be directed in an atmosphere where taking God's name in vain is a part of the every day vocabulary," he wrote, adding that he didn't much care for the way his buddies carried on after hours, subjecting him to "drunken tales of moral emptiness [and] passing out penicillin pills and seeing promiscuity on the part of married men." It's a remarkable document, all the more so when compared with another letter, which surfaced earlier in the presidential campaign. As Fred Barnes writes (see page 58), Bill Clinton had everything going for him this year in the all-important South—except credibility on two fundamental issues. Any bets that Perot now outpolls Clinton in Dixie this November? The only ads he'll need to run will feature his letter alongside draft-avoiding Bill's. Just to play it safe, though, Perot might want to buy up all extant copies of this month's issue—Paul Johnson's magisterial portrayal (page 54) of the sanctimonious and humorless Jefferson Davis will probably hit too close to home.

OF COURSE, not all conservatives are famous for their humor, either—which explains why a number of them are making no bones about preferring the coldly efficient Perot to the Republican incumbent, who shows conviction only in refusing to learn from his mistakes. Let conservatives be duly warned, however. Overt support of Perot, especially if it involves significant money transfers, could win them a prominent spot on P. J. O'Rourke's annual Enemies List. Join P. J. on page 12 as he launches this year's E-List campaign.

"Okay, one more time..."



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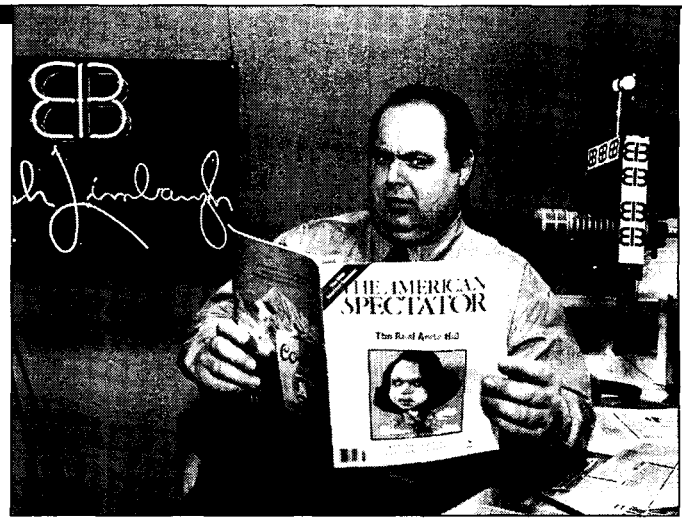

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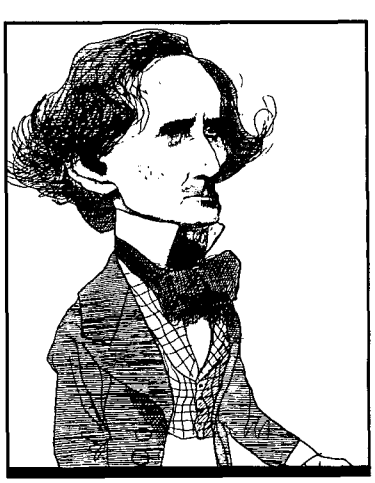

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Jefferson Davis

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Cover illustration by John Springs.
Interior drawings by John Springs and Jake Tapper.

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• Like a live grenade at a PLO reunion, blame for the Rodney King riots was tossed about every which way in May, and when the dust settled for Memorial Day, the liberals declared themselves cleaner and the conservatives dirtier than ever. But not before America bared its soul to the world. As only he can, the *New York Times*'s Anthony Lewis covered all twelve steps in one leap and said the riots "showed us an American society that has lost its way." The *Washington Post*'s Hobart Rowen went one step beyond to introduce America's search for a post–Cold War enemy: "The riots . . . have shown who the enemy is. It is us." An even broader, historical view was taken by Mr. Mark Ndesandjo of San Francisco, who named Mr. King the "Dred Scott of the Era." Naturally, the world liked what it heard. Iraq called for a special meeting of the U.N. Security Council, Kenya and China scorned American "hypocrisy," Libyan radio announced that George Bush "is not fit to be President," and François Mitterrand mocked the "results" of President Bush's "extremely conservative political ideology." The French president's weird reading was seconded by California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, who predicted a political boom for "people who look like George Bush, sound like George Bush, and advocate like George Bush, i.e., a kind of police state mentality." What does it say when Libyan radio has greater credibility than an American Democrat?

• Or was Brown confusing Bush with Broward County Circuit Judge J. Leonard Fleet, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, who waved a .38-caliber revolver at a probation violator who'd threatened to kill him and dared the unruly defendant to "take your best shot"? The Los Angeles riots had other spillover effects. In the south central waters of California's Monterey Bay, marauding gangs of killer orcas devoured countless gray whale females and calves, and the U.S. Coast Guard was nowhere to be seen. Mr. Patrick Buchanan met with Korean-American property owners in Los Angeles, and at commencement exercises at the University of Notre Dame, President Bush was verbally assaulted by Valedictorian Sarah J. McGrath. Giving New Age meaning to the term Fighting Irish, Miss McGrath said Mr. Bush's rhetoric fails to "bespeak the interconnectedness of all peoples." An expert in the field is Bishop Eamonn Casey of Galway, a friend of the Third World who in 1984 won everlasting fame for refusing to meet with President Reagan. On May 6, the good bishop resigned amidst reports that he'd paid a six-figure sum to a woman whose child he sired.

• Arkansas governor Bill Clinton, father to 12-year-old Chelsea, may not be governor come August. According to the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, 75 percent of Arkansans want him to resign if he wins the Democratic presidential nomination. What is Clinton up to these days? "Oh, about 230 pounds," say voices from the back of his campaign plane. As things stand, Clinton can follow the lead of the defeated Philippine presidential candidate Miriam Defensor Santiago, who on May 23 began a liquid fast to protest election fraud. In a milestone for the Excellence in Education movement, Washington, D.C. mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly ordered the mandatory distribution of colorful condoms to all high-schoolers in the district. Plans to extend the program to this summer's crop of tourists came to naught when the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office rejected the red-white-and-blue condom flag trademark designed by the Old Glory Condom Corporation for a product that has all the earmarks of a national treasure.

• Several pressing matters can be settled right here and now. Was the Great Society a disaster? Not for Ross Perot, the undeclared one-man third party who made his fortune shuffling the paperwork generated by Medicare. Was Murphy Brown right to eschew marriage? Yes, if otherwise it would have meant marrying anyone at all like Mr. Michael Murray of Millbury, Massachusetts. After a visit to his

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working spouse on Mother's Day, Mr. Murray packed their 20-month-old daughter into the family car, left the 3-month-old in a car seat atop the sunroof, and drove off. "The garage was dark," Mr. Murray replied when later asked how he could have forgotten about his son. Thanks to Great Society–imposed safety regulations, the tot survived his eventual fall.

• Social and political reform is never easy. In Garden City, New York, Dr. Michael T. Petrik, a criminal-justice professor who teaches an "alternatives to prison" course at Nassau County Community College, confessed to helping two felons escape from the Mid-Orange Correctional Facility in Warwick, New York, and the District of Columbia's push toward statehood was slowed when a D.C. superior court judge denied Mr. John W. Hinckley, Jr. permission to register to vote. Although an unusually large number of death sentences were carried out across the nation in May, the movement toward choice made headway in the realm of capital punishment. According to a plan proposed by California Attorney General Dan Lungren, a condemned inmate would be allowed to choose between lethal injection or the gas chamber. Death-row inmates already enjoy rich last-meal menus.

• Evangelist Mikhail Gorbachev brought his May Day tour to nine U.S. cities, and revived an old Soviet tradition. In San Francisco, over 4,000 groupies read books and drank heavily while standing in line up to four hours for a chance to see him. The holy man did not disappoint. "He turned around and grabbed my hand," the palpitant Mrs. Irene Vance of Corte Madera recounted. Unlike Raisa, "he's got the eyes. He looked right at me, deeply." Lame-duck president Donald Kennedy of Stanford remains proud of his work, contending that "no one profited" from the $200 million the university overcharged the feds, "that the mistakes were honest ones." Kennedy will teach environmental policy studies at Stanford's Washington campus next winter, where the pickings should be easier. The Senate is currently reviewing grants for such projects as the mating habits of aggressive Nicaraguan fish, the life cycle of swallowtail butterflies, and the behavior of bidders at public auctions. For instance, who can explain why a lock of Lord Byron's hair was expected to fetch only $900 at Bonham's auction house in London, whereas a black leather jacket once owned by John Lennon sold for $43,100 at Christie's on May 7? Meanwhile, Mr. Kennedy seems a logical choice to examine why wind power, a favored Northern California alternative energy source, has brought death to at least 567 eagles and hawks in Alameda and Contra Costa counties over the past two years. Better yet, he might look into the environmental hazards posed by pressurized toilets on board Amtrak's auto train. The latest victim is Mr. Benjamin Barad, of Palm Beach, Florida, who is suing Amtrak for what little it's worth over a commode that backfired, leaving him skunk-filthy and unwashed for twelve hours because the train had no running water. Mr. Barad retired recently after forty-five years as a hygiene teacher.

—WP

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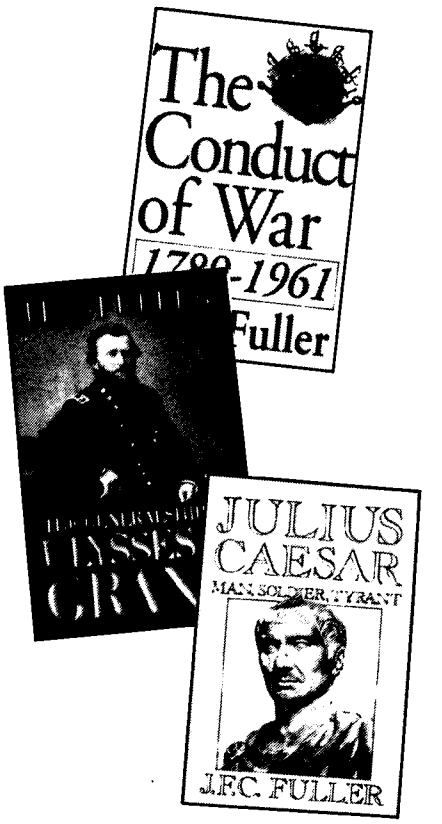

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Unheavenly Cities

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

The indignation of our friends the liberal Democrats at White House charges that their policies were responsible for the Los Angeles rampage was, I believe, sincere. The liberal Democrats are for the most part unaware of twenty years of economic and social analysis that demonstrates with the utmost cogency that the vast majority of Great Society programs begun in the 1960s and slavishly funded ever since have relegated many of the urban poor to hopeless, disorganized lives of extraordinary squalor and violence.

Since the late 1960s serious scholars such as Edward Banfield, James Q. Wilson, and Milton Friedman have analyzed liberal approaches to such diverse problems as poverty, crime, and dependency and come to the conclusion that with few exceptions liberal approaches only worsen these problems. Most of their research was unassailable and so liberals bereft of the boldness to rethink urban policies or the courage to cut off all the interest groups feasting off these policies stopped reading it. They have every reason to be angry with Marlin Fitzwater's assertion that "many of the root problems that have resulted in inner-city difficulties were started in the 1960s and 1970s, and they have failed."

The Democrats' most likely presidential nominee, Governor Bill Clinton, characterized Fitzwater's assertion as "scapegoating" and "unbelievable." I think Clinton's response is heartfelt. I doubt he has ever heard of Edward Banfield's pioneering study of the modern urban condition, *The Unheavenly City*; and he probably has not even leafed through Charles Murray's more recent and equally trenchant analysis of liberal urban policy, aptly titled *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980.*

While denouncing the White House, Clinton, that tribune of change and new ideas, called for vast new public works projects for the inner city and for annually raising the minimum wage to keep up with inflation. Professor Yale Brozen of the University of Chicago was the first economist to demonstrate that each increase in the minimum wage throws young people out of work. He published his research forty years ago. Since then, economists such as Milton Friedman and Finis Welch have made the case against the minimum wage law irrefutable. Yet Boy Clinton is oblivious. He would have us index the minimum wage and throw ever more young people out of work. Not surprisingly he is governor of one of the Republic's poorest states.

Urban policy is one of the many areas of public discourse where liberals stopped talking to conservatives years ago. Their consciences are clean when they brand those who would approach urban problems differently as "neglectful" (Clinton's term) or racists (Senator Jim Sasser's recent charge), because their minds are blank. Nonetheless, our cities have steadily declined since liberal Democratic "reformers" heaved out machine politicians so many years ago. And it is in precisely those areas where the "reformers" promised the most—race relations, education, crime, poverty—that the decline has been greatest. In fact, Los Angeles's tragedy is a liberals' fiasco. Most Americans perceived the injustice of the acquittal even as they perceived the crime of Rodney King's drunken, high-speed resistance to arrest. But it is the liberal "reformers" who have made it so difficult to convict brutes in a court of law. It is the liberal "reformers" who have allowed lawlessness to steadily increase on inner-city streets. It is the liberal "reformers" who have encouraged populations to adopt racial identities and unappeasable grievances, and it is the liberal "reformers" who justify violence.

Now along comes Secretary of Housing Jack Kemp. For years he has suggested urban reforms based on the scholarship of the aforementioned scholars. No one in government has been particularly interested. Eliminating capital gains for inner-city investment, encouraging the poor to work with tax reductions and other rewards, implementing educational choice, privatizing government housing, encouraging private industry into troubled areas—all these enlightened policies coming from Kemp are about as popular with liberal Democrats as closing military bases in their districts. Yet they are the only plausible ideas left. Before the liberal Democrats took over the cities, life for the urban poor was hard but steadily improving. Then the federal government began its ministrations, costing $2.6 trillion since 1965. If Bill Clinton is really for change he ought to read up on Kemp's policies and take a look at Yale Brozen. ❐

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times *column syndicated by King Features.*

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Erratum

I am very interested in reading the remainder of Joe Queenan's "Reality Check" (*TAS*, June 1992)—or is this a ploy to find out how many people read *TAS* cover-to-cover? —*Bob Lee*
Powell, Wyoming

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski replies:
The last sentence of Joe Queenan's piece should have read: "I'll be starting the session with Barney Frank, and I *think we're going to be in there awhile*." The article was intact when it left our offices, but the printer inadvertently allowed the last paragraphs to "reflow" on his computer, resulting in the dropped line. Profuse apologies to Mr. Queenan and to our readers.

You Are Cordially Invited to Plague the Locusts

during the

Senator Joe McCarthy Memorial New Enemies List 3rd Annual Readers' Update

Drop your John Lockes and pick up your 9mm Glocks. It's time to plink liberal icons and totems. Imagine what fun a liberal shooting range would be—spring-loaded traps throwing Toni Morrison novels, cartons of Ben and Jerry's ice cream, and Midnight Oil CDs across the skeet field; indoor targets made of Benetton sweaters, spotted owls, Native American handicrafts, tie-dye T-shirts, *Thelma and Louise* movie posters, healing crystals, and solar-powered automobiles, and, on weekends, driven hunts featuring live members of the Modern Language Association.

Alas, we'll have to make do with mere pen and ink for the time being. But let's make it count. This year—instead of criticizing specific geeks, shills, fat ladies, bunko steerers, and clip merchants—let's go after the carnival itself. Who is funding left-wing activity in the United States? Who is sponsoring liberal nonsense? Who is footing the bill for the Luddism, anti-individualism, socialism, and atheistic antinomianism that permeate our culture? Who pays the piper? Who feeds the horde of rats he leads?

TAS readers are invited to submit the names of institutions, trade associations, corporations, government departments, churches, charities, universities, labor unions, crime syndicates, U.N. programs, and deep-pocketed men and women who give money to fools. The name of each person or organization should be accompanied by examples of eleemosynary folly. Also welcome is information about how groups of bad people finance themselves (e.g., the various Naderite safety lobbies that raise money by abetting liability lawyers in the abuse of tort law). And let us not forget to list those companies—such as television networks and movie studios—that have made a capitalist industry out of pinko opinions.

Individuals *per se* will not be the theme of this year's New Enemies List, except in one category. A special "Peter Ueberroth Gold Medal for 100-Meter-Dash-Carrying-a-VCR" will be awarded to public figures who praised, encouraged, downplayed, excused, or called for "understanding of" the murder, assault, arson, and theft that took place in Los Angeles this spring. Yes, Spike Lee, you sawed-off Iago, this means you. And you, too, George Bush.

—P. J. O'Rourke

Send your nominations by August 15, 1992, to: Enemies List, *The American Spectator*, P.O. Box 549, Arlington, VA 22216-0549.

The Odd Couple

After having read the movie review of *Medicine Man* in your April issue, we can honestly say that we've never been more offended and disgusted by an article before in our lives. James Bowman's comments about Lorraine Braco [sic] and the "native *chicks*" are racist as well as sexist. His attitude toward women is a little more than outdated. If all he wanted from the film was to see a woman's chest, he should have stayed home and rented a porno!

It is obvious that Mr. James Bowman is abusing his privilege as a journalist, if he should even be given that status. It is enough of a disgrace that he should actually feel this way, but why is he being given the opportunity to have his perverted thoughts published?

Obviously Mr. Bowman did not like this movie. Fine. But, it is disgusting that he feels that it would have been worthwhile at least if Lorraine Braco [sic] had shown some skin. So what your movie critic is really saying is that a bad movie can be salvaged simply by having the female actresses undress for the camera. If this were even meant to be some kind of joke, it still would be in very poor taste.

We think you should reconsider Mr. Bowman's position with your magazine. But, seeing as this was edited and printed, we must conclude that you do not find this appalling. Are you all that sexist in Virginia? Please let us know.

—Olga Courtois
Irene Vassilopoulos
Montreal, Quebec

Guns or Roses

Brock Yates's "Guns for the Home" (*TAS*, April 1992) brings a point to mind that Yates, curiously, does not mention. With all the emphasis in the article on scaring away (rather than plugging) the attacker, either by showing him the muzzle of the gun, letting him hear it being loaded, or shooting it out the window, why not solve the kiddie-access problem

(continued on page 14)

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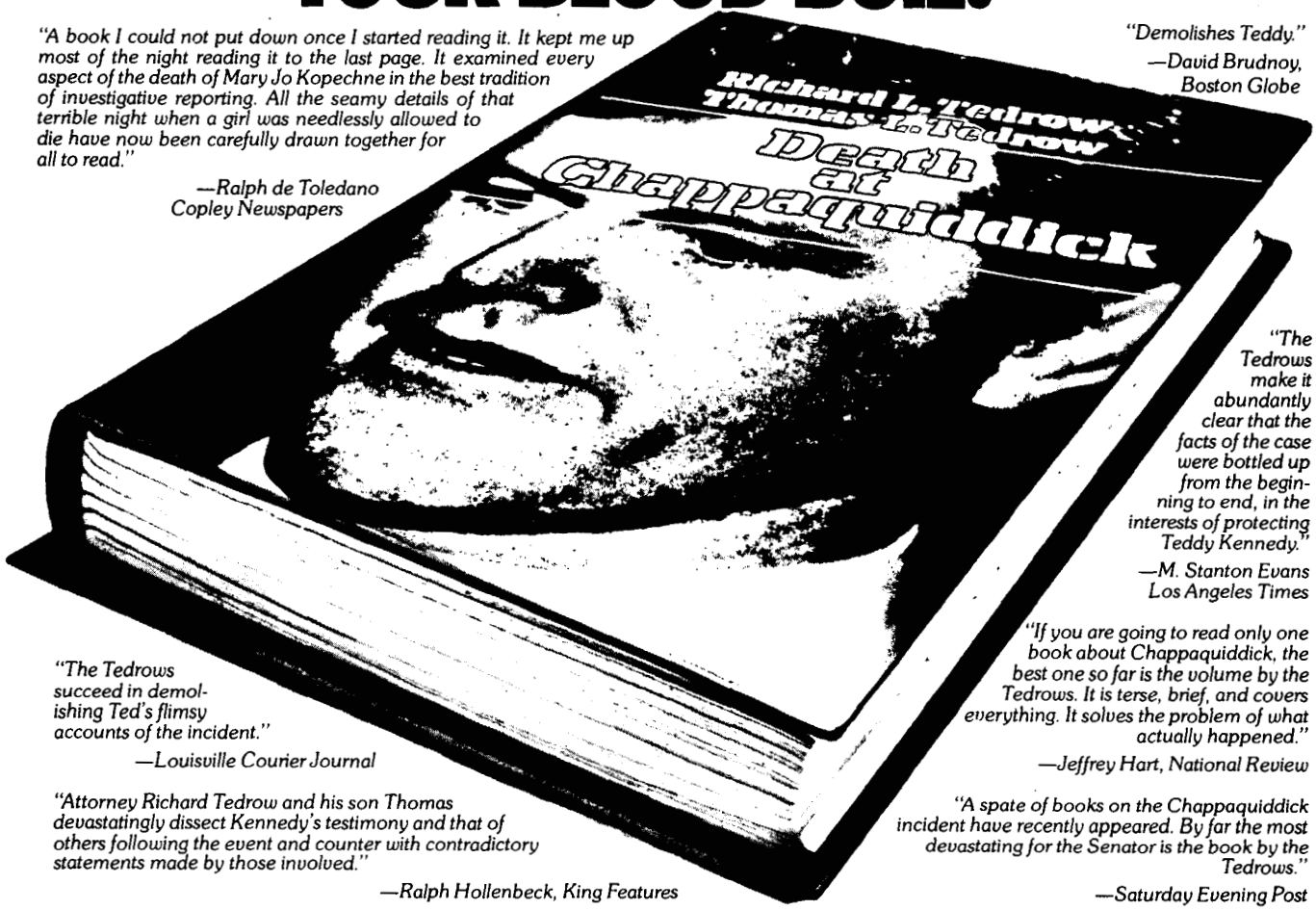
—Ralph de Toledano
Copley Newspapers

"Demolishes Teddy."

—David Brudnoy,
Boston Globe



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by loading it only with blanks? In most cases this would do the trick. Even if one took a shot at the attacker using a blank, he would probably make just as hurried an exit as if it were a real bullet, anticipating that although the first shot missed, the second might not.

I'll have to admit, though, that it would take quite a bit of *chutzpah* to counterattack a bad guy knowing that your armament contained only blanks.

—Leonard W. Fromm, Jr.
Margate, Florida

Two cheers and a few boos for Brock Yates's piece on guns. While Mr. Yates understands the necessity of gun ownership, he apparently knows little about their proper use in self-defense.

Although it is certainly true that most criminal activity comes to an abrupt halt when faced with a firearm, it is not always so. Criminals appear to have an almost animal sense about these matters, and know instantly if their victim is capable of firing or not. If you have cause to point a gun at one of these products of American Liberalism, and aren't prepared to shoot him if necessary, what he's going to do once he takes the gun from you won't be pretty. So decide before you buy a gun whether or not you are capable of using it on a human being.

Shotguns are fine defense weapons, but they have a down side as well. Long guns are much easier to twist from your hand than are the shorter handguns—a consideration for any homeowner bent on prowling his property in the dark of night to check out the noise his wife heard.

When it comes to handguns, Mr. Yates should have left the nonsense out of his article. A .45 slug does not hit like the "flat of a shovel." Like any handgun bullet, even a .45 slug is useless if it doesn't penetrate. In reality, a well-swung shovel has a hell of a lot more energy than any handgun bullet. Also for those not "into" guns, a large caliber handgun is very difficult to use in any case.

All serious calibers will shoot a variety of bullet *styles*. The key is to pick the best bullet style for the intended purpose. For instance, what is commonly called "hardball" is a poor choice in any caliber as it zips through walls easily to endanger innocents, and has poor "stopping power." Best stick with a modern hollow point design.

One final note: Never, ever fire a warning shot. This bit of advice from Mr. Yates will get you into trouble without helping your situation one damn bit!

—Ray Rusch
Dubuque, Iowa

While I generally applaud Brock Yates's article on guns for self-defense, even to his choice of the Walther PPK as the ideal carrying piece, I think he is gravely wrong in his answer to his own "basic question." Exactly what we are *not* trying to do is to "deter" criminals. We are armed to shoot them.

The cities are full of feral humans, and to confront them without the will to follow through is to court suicide. Buying a gun is only the first step in the metamorphosis from lamb to lion. You have to believe in your absolute right to live your life unmolested by thieves, and the thieves' corresponding lack of any rights at all. You have to accept that you are taking personal responsibility for life and death, and decide where the line shall be. Melodramatic as it may sound, you must be determined to prevail in mortal conflict. A gun, without the will to use it, is a danger to its owner.

While it is a citizen's prerogative to show mercy, as I have, to an assailant once he is sufficiently cowed, only a loser would fire a warning shot if the outcome of the situation were in any doubt. Anyone willing to forfeit the advantage of surprise and waste needed ammunition in order to spare his enemies should probably not spend $300 on what amounts to a glorified rape whistle.

—Steve Roberts
Northridge, California

Convinced

Ernest van den Haag accepts at least a soft version of the radical feminist tenet that rape fundamentally expresses a need to dominate and humiliate, as opposed to a brutal, primitive sexual urge ("Thinking About Rape," *TAS*, April 1992). Worse, his argument is convincing. Does this mean that radical feminists, whose central thesis is that relations between the sexes are about power, cannot be depended on to be wrong about everything?

—Malcolm J. Sherman
Albany, New York

As a feminist, I must admit that this magazine was one of the last places I ever expected to see a sensible, even-handed analysis of acquaintance rape. I must thank Ernest van den Haag for surprising me.

Contrary to what many conservatives seem to think (see especially the vitriolic rant by Norman Podhoretz in the October 1991 issue of *Commentary*), the feminist concern about acquaintance rape does not reflect a vicious or man-hating nature. If we *did* hate men, date rape would be a much smaller problem; we would find ourselves less often in the situations that make rape possible because we would not seek out men's company, and we would not feel betrayed because we never would have trusted. To acknowledge this, as van den Haag implicitly does, is to understand why the notion of date rape sometimes seems so ambiguous and why the ambiguity makes it no less real. Genuine misunderstandings and ambivalence *are* possible. Maybe this means that equating acquaintance rape with violent stranger rape as a legal issue is not the most helpful way of understanding or combating it. But it does not

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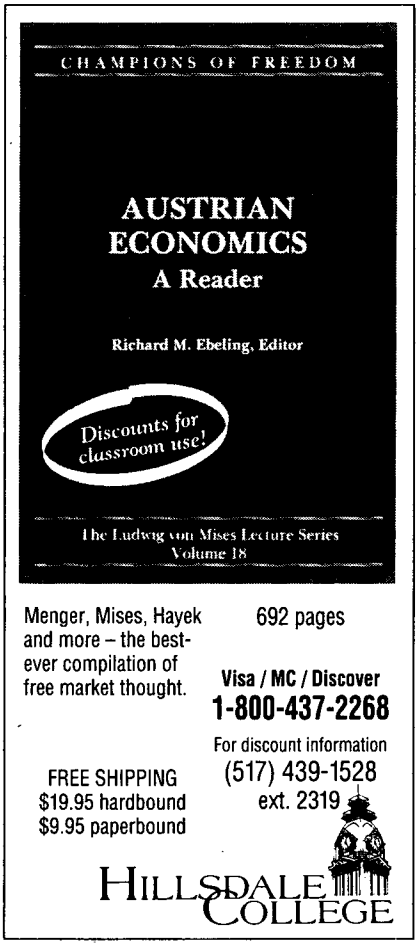

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Sonny California

by Tom Bethell

The California Republicans held a convention at the Burlingame Hyatt this winter, and I'm afraid I have been a little slow in getting around to telling you about it. By the time you read this, most of the candidates will have been eliminated! But there were debates, balloons, buttons, and hospitality suites. I met Rep. Bob Dornan in an elevator. He roared out my name and thrust out a hand so aggressively that I thought he was going to punch me in the stomach. I was flattered because I hadn't seen him for years. It turned out that he knew everybody else in the elevator. For some reason he started to tell me about the toupee worn by one of the candidates. On learning that I wasn't aware of that political detail, he looked at me in downright amazement. Then he headed off down the corridor, roaring out the names of everyone coming in the opposite direction. Politicians! How do they do it?

In Sonny Bono's suite there were only seven or eight people. Bono himself was standing alone in the middle of the room, not talking to anyone. He was wearing huge specs balanced on the tip of his nose and a double-breasted suit, 1940s-style. Until recently, he was the mayor of Palm Springs, a desert city where for some reason rich people like Bob Hope and Kirk Douglas love to live. In the debate, Bono had caused much merriment by so conspicuously reading his answers from a thumb-indexed, loose-leaf folder. But at one point he brought the house down. In answer to a question about the Endangered Species Act he said without further explanation: "In my city of Palm Springs, the fringe-toed lizards are the biggest landowners. We have eight of them."

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent and a media fellow at the Hoover Institution.*

I asked him if he would elaborate on that. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management was the culprit, he said. "Whenever we have some growth in the city we have to dedicate some land to the lizards." As to the spelling, he thought it was toad-lizards. I think it must be -toed lizards, but he could be right. No one else seems to know for sure. A woman, maybe Mary, his fourth wife, was laying out portions of Tiramisu, "a luxury Italian dessert," and Amaretto cookies; an improvement over the peanuts and pretzels to be found in the Dannemeyer suite. But by the time you read this, Sonny Bono surely will be out of the running for the Senate and back running his restaurant in Palm Springs.

Voters are looking for newcomers, but they must at least know what's going on. Otherwise, incumbents will get away with their old tricks as easily as conjurers at a child's birthday party. This could be the downfall of Ross Perot. Sooner or later he's liable to show that he doesn't really understand the way the system operates. Voters will then suspect he won't be able to reform it. Congress needs more outsiders and certainly more who have risen as dramatically as Bono. He started out in the 1950s driving a delivery truck on Sunset Boulevard, where he would drop off his own songs at the record companies. Legislators with such a background might be expected to appreciate and preserve an unregulated society. Then again, to apply such a lesson to the political arena requires intellectual breadth, and Bono lacks it. "He ran as an outsider," said his 1988 mayoral campaign manager, "and 24 hours after the election he was one of the Establishment that he was crusading against."

In the debate, Bono said to Rep. Tom Campbell: "I've written ten hit songs, and I know this, Tom. You're not in tune with California Republicans." Maybe. Maybe not. Campbell is an immensely polished two-term congressman who represents Silicon Valley. He has degrees in both law and economics and is tenured at Stanford University. He is locally famous for his smooth reply to the former Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, who asked him at a Hoover lunch to describe the difference between Republicans and Democrats. Republicans believe in creating wealth, Democrats in redistributing it, Campbell said without a pause. It would be nice if there were such a clear distinction between the two parties, of course. The main problem with U.S. politics right now is that we have a one-party system masquerading as a competitive system. For this George Bush is primarily to blame, and Ross Perot the beneficiary. (An *L.A. Times* poll of California voters in mid-May showed Perot leading, Bush third.)

On the social issues, Campbell himself stands perilously close to Democratic territory, more or less following Pete Wilson's lead. He voted for the Democrats' version of the new civil privileges law, a modified version of which was enacted with Republican support. It overthrows the presumption of innocence—one of our most basic civil rights. Then again, Campbell is much more intelligent than the average pol and is capable of seeing beyond the short horizons of special interest. Unlike some prominent (and anti-defense) Democrats, he did not resist the recommended closure of a military base in his own district. He has a proposal linking spending reductions to automatic income-tax rate reductions that might succeed in bringing the taxpayers to the bargaining table of budget deliberations. At least it's worth a try. →

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Campbell has the quality of earnest and sincere ambition that is probably required in big-state politics. When he meets you and grasps your hand you know, you really do, that you alone concern him at that moment—you and your valuable opinions. Bruce Herschensohn, the Los Angeles radio commentator who came close to winning the Republican Senate primary in 1986, cannot quite pull this off, is my impression. I met him only briefly—in his hospitality suite, where he was surrounded by a great crush of people. He's less the pol and more the idea man with a strongly conservative bent; a supporter of the flat tax, "sunset" legislation, and so on. The problem is that running a statewide campaign here takes big money, and the people you have to approach to get it do expect to receive that heartfelt gaze. If you can't deliver it, they won't deliver either.

I'm told also by elected Republicans sympathetic to Herschensohn that in recent years he may have been a tiny bit too comfortably ensconced at Musso and Frank's Grill on Hollywood Boulevard. Herschensohn's support is likely to be more intense than Campbell's, however, and so he might win. As I write, however, Campbell has raised $2 million more than Herschensohn for those indispensable TV commercials. As far as the other Senate race is concerned, it seems all too clear that Bill Allen, a thoughtful black conservative and a professor of government at Claremont, and Congressman William Dannemeyer, will split the conservative vote. This will permit the appointed and not very inspiring incumbent, John Seymour, to walk down the middle untouched.

The Democratic and GOP presidential contests were all but over before the California primary. But early in May I had dinner with Pat Buchanan, his wife Shelley, and a couple of friends at the Hayes Street Grill in San Francisco. Outside the restaurant there was a conspicuous contingent of Secret Service agents; inside, too, the Buchanan table was kept under surveillance by conservatively tailored gents. Flattering! My main impression was that Buchanan has greatly enjoyed running for President. He travels about giving speeches, parts of which may be incorporated into the evening news; receives federal matching funds, and of course he has that attentive bodyguard.

Buchanan deserves great credit for running—for at least trying to give the GOP the jolt it so badly needs. Over a four-month period, however, Buchanan's primary percentage steadily declined, even though he was (through accumulating publicity) becoming better known to the public. This suggests a growing disappointment on the part of an electorate that was eagerly looking for someone other than Bush, but more and more realized that Buchanan was not the man. And my sense is that Buchanan's message has been flawed. The remedies he has offered—cracking down on immigrants, getting tough with the Japanese, taking a hard look at imports—not only do not address the economic mess that we are in, but might actually make it worse.

He did effectively transmit the message that he would keep George Bush's broken promise—no new taxes. But we're more undone by the reality of old taxes than the prospect of new. Buchanan should not have allowed Jerry Brown of California to run, surprisingly effectively, with the potent flat-tax issue. That should have been Buchanan's for the taking. I told him this, and he vaguely agreed. The problem is that he is inclined to disparage the whole economic worldview (studying the way incentives affect our behavior with respect to scarce resources), in favor of a morally driven outlook that emphasizes "values." True, bad values are more fundamental, and do lead to bad economics. Moreover, utopian liberalism, still very much in the saddle in the United States, has written these bad values into law. Savers are confiscated by taxation, earners are gouged to fund programs that reward irresponsible behavior, and so on. But in order to correct a mess of this magnitude the dismal economics, in addition to the askew values, must be cogently addressed.

I asked Buchanan if he was going to speak at the Republican National Convention. "I'm going to be speaking in Houston," he said. "It's only a matter of which hall." Either way he would get the media. What other story would there be to cover? In general he spoke warmly of Bush, and feels that his campaign sharpened Bush's own skills on the hustings.

Bush has held the line on appointments to the federal judiciary, which may be sufficient to warrant continued support from conservatives. But that is all he has held the line on. In an endless display of political ineptness that is in some respects baffling, Bush has freely discarded the remaining issues that once distinguished Republicans from Democrats—taxes, spending, and quotas, for example. The defense issue, which worked powerfully for Republicans in the last three elections (think of Brezhnev, Andropov, Dukakis in his tank), has now dissolved along with the Soviet Union itself.

Which brings me to Mikhail Gorbachev. He spoke at Stanford University in early May, and it seemed impossible to find a forum large enough to accommodate his admirers. In the end, 9,500 people were admitted to the (outdoor) Frost Amphitheater. Still others were turned away disappointed, despite queuing for hours. Home-grown pols were no doubt grateful that Gorby wasn't running for a Senate seat. Paul Brest, the dean of Stanford law school, compared Gorbachev to Thomas More, who saw greed as a fundamental barrier to a more just society, and in whose Utopia property was communal. A "vision of the same sort," Brest felt, "underlay Gorbachev's commitment to socialism." Brest here surely identifies the real basis of liberal enthusiasm for Gorbachev.

All the same, Gorbachev's speech was actually quite interesting, and one feels that "naive socialist" doesn't do justice to the man. He quoted the Russian philosophers Berdyaev and Soloviev, whose religious outlook was reminiscent of Solzhenitsyn's; and he grappled with the difficult but important idea of the rule of law. In the Soviet Union they didn't have it, he conceded: law had there been reduced to "pure declaration" and "an arbitrary tool of politics." One wishes our own political leaders would start thinking along such lines. I'm sure Bush never has. It seems to me that praising Gorbachev is a small price to pay for the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union—something I didn't expect to see—and for once I'm happy to join in the chorus. ❐

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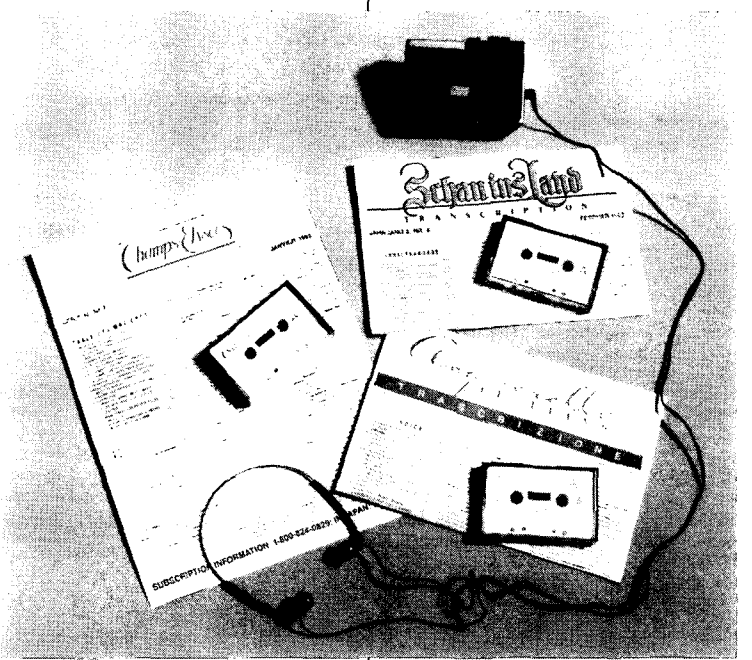

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Fidel's World

Two weeks on an abandoned island.

by Patrick Symmes

Havana

The first time Fidel Castro died was in the 1950s. "We have the head of Castro," announced the dictator Fulgencio Batista, just before Fidel ran him out of town. Castro's enemies have killed him a number of times: he was dead at the Bay of Pigs; he would never survive the seventies; the eighties were his last gasp. Now in its fifth decade, the death watch has become a fixture: at first the patient was grave, then graver, then *gravísimo*.

Can this really be it? *Diario Latino* claims that Fidel and his brother Raúl have purchased a tiny island in the Indian Ocean as a getaway spot for their exile; Jorge Mas Canosa, the self-appointed leader of the exile community, marches around Washington announcing that Cuba is totally shut down; the *Miami Herald* reports that some exiles have sold their houses in preparation for the trip home. The fall is "imminent," the regime is "tottering." A conservative friend tells me Castro will soon end his days a Caribbean Ceausescu, hanging from a Havana lamppost. I decide I had better get down there quickly; it is a rare chance to see the fomenting of a revolution.

The streets of Havana are quiet, the buildings unpainted for so long that the skyline is in shades of cement. There are grand old buildings, a few even restored, but little activity in them. Restaurants are closed for lack of cooking gas, and storefronts are everywhere shut up or deserted. There are regular blackouts in the afternoons, when the power stations simply run out of oil, and at night the streets are as dark and quiet as a country village, lit only by the blue glow of an occasional television set.

Where the Soviets once supplied 13 million metric tons of oil a year, the

Patrick Symmes is a writer living in McLean, Virginia.

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Russians now supply half that. There are no taxis left, except for special tourist taxis accepting only dollars. The Eastern European bus factory demands hard currency now, so there are no spare parts, and bus service has been cut back 75 percent. It takes three weeks to get a train or bus ticket out of Havana, and the city bus services are so crowded that ten or twenty men will hang on the outside of the bus, fingers gripping the window frame and feet braced on the wheel wells as the bus rockets across town. It is a thrilling way to ride, but not one I hope to repeat soon.

The Great Bearded One is constantly on television, but no one mentions his name. They simply call him "the comrade," or "this fellow," said with the gesture of stroking a bushy beard, as if saying the name could bring bad luck.

There are slogans everywhere, but socialism is rarely mentioned: nationalism is the message, and foreign domination the threat. "100% Cuban" is stenciled on construction sites, although the Cubans could use some foreign help with their infrastructure. *"I'm staying here"* is another slogan, a plaintive admission that not everyone is. Che Guevara is the poster boy of the Revolution, his chiseled face on display in shops and homes and on T-shirts. Only dead heroes are useful to Castro.

The Great Bearded One is constantly on television, but no one mentions his name. They simply call him "the comrade," or "this fellow," said with the gesture of stroking a bushy beard, as if saying the name could bring bad luck.

Delinquents

The grandfather of all the dead heroes is Jose Martí, the liberator of 1895. I rested for a moment at the foot of Martí's statue, and a thin young man approached. He asked the time, the standard excuse for talking to a foreigner, and we fell into conversation. His name was Ramón. He was 21 and had just finished his military service. He was unemployed, and earned a little money by approaching foreigners, offering to sell cigars under the counter or change dollars at fifteen times what the government offered. The only work available paid 40 pesos a month, he said, a tiny wage in worthless currency. He was proud of his connections—he vowed he could get me reservations at Fidel Castro's favorite restaurant, or a gram of cocaine, or enough Jamaican "María" to blow my mind, even a beautiful *chica* for the evening.

"You can get anything you want in Cuba, if you have dollars," he said. With pesos it isn't so easy: we waited through a long queue to get into a bar serving iced tea, one of the only things not on ration. Despite the line, the little shop was only half full—the door was kept locked to prevent customers from walking in—and the iced tea was made by an old man with the slow ceremony of a priest celebrating Mass. Some of the people in the bar were staring at us, and Ramón grew uncomfortable. When the tea came we guzzled our glasses and left, and in the street he explained it was unwise to draw attention. We began walking toward the harbor and I asked if the police ever bothered him for speaking to foreigners.

"Not much," he replied, and at that instant we were seized from behind and whipped around. Two policemen separated us, and before I could speak Ramón was dragged off in one direction as I was taken in the other. My policeman did not say a word, so I put on a thick gringo accent and explained I had been asking directions to the Museum of the Revolution.

"Papers!" snapped the cop. I handed over my passport and watched Ramón being interrogated less politely a block away. People were passing by, pretending not to look.

"He asked you to change money," announced my cop. I grinned loopily and asked again for directions to the museum.

"He wanted to change money," the cop repeated. "He is a delinquent who wanted to rob you." I saw a flash of silver down the block and watched the cop slap a pair of handcuffs onto Ramón. They disappeared around a corner. I turned up the voltage on my innocent-tourist act, insisting that I was lost and that the boy had merely been showing me the way to the museum.

My cop began to loosen up and returned my passport. "You should be careful," he urged me. "Many of these youths are delinquents, dangerous criminals. You shouldn't talk to them."

He led me off in the direction of the museum, this time without crushing my arm. After an awkward silence, he could not contain his curiosity and shyly asked if I was enjoying Cuba. We walked all the way to the museum together, discussing baseball. By the time my arm had stopped smarting, we parted with a handshake and he strolled off, turning back once with a friendly wave. As soon as he rounded a corner, I dashed back to the tea shop. Ramón was nowhere to be found.

Cabaret

There were fewer police in the provincial towns, and more food and transportation. In place of buses with young men hanging from the windows there was the noisy clip-clop of horses pulling taxi carts. Another face of Cuba emerged—the happy face put on for tourists. When I arrived late in the evening at a gleaming tourist hotel in the south coast city of Cienfuegos the bellhop was so thrilled to see me he began to stutter.

"H-H-Hello, tourist!" he gushed. It was easy to see why he was excited. The hotel had 160 rooms, of which fewer than ten were occupied.

The bellhop dashed about with my bag, explaining in English the many "wonderful, marvelous things of this, your Cuban hotel." There was a swimming pool, a bar, and two

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restaurants, and he pointed out the sound of musicians tuning up for *el show*.

"The cabaret. Marvelous. You can't miss it. Many girls, some with almost anything you can imagine!"

I begged off, saying it had been a long ride from Havana, and headed into the elevator. He was shocked. "Many big women!" he called out hopefully. "You can look but you cannot touch!"

The tourist invasion has produced a collision between socialism and hedonism that leaves both sides shaking their heads. Castro hopes that the tourists will inject enough hard currency into the country to save him, without spreading any of their dangerous ideas about democracy and freedom. He has constructed a kind of tourist apartheid, whereby Italians, Germans, and Canadians arrive by the planeload to sunbathe, drink rum, and dance in conga lines, yet never meet an ordinary Cuban. Where possible, the hotels are built on isolated strips of land or in entire beach colonies, like the one at Varadero a hundred miles east of Havana, where the only Cubans are waiters and chambermaids.

During the 1950s one of the worst sins of the Batista regime was that it allowed just such privileged enclaves. Cubans walked onto the resorts only as busboys and prostitutes, and Castro's propagandists made much of the promise that never again would Cubans be shut out of their own country. The claim was codified in the current constitution, where Act 43 specifically states that no Cuban can be banned from any beach, park, or hotel anywhere on the island.

Act 43, however, was worth exactly the paper it was printed on. Tourists have special taxis, special hotels, special food and drink. As before, Cubans enter only as servants to make the beds or as prostitutes to lie in them. Some of the young Cubans I met openly called it tropical apartheid, and it is probably the single least popular policy in the country.

In the morning I sat on my balcony and looked through a telephoto lens at the Cienfuegos nuclear power plant. From six miles away I could see that the huge construction cranes surrounding it were stilled. The reactors were abandoned after great expense and effort because it had been designed as a replica of the Chernobyl plant. The Soviets had pulled out, saying the construction was so bad it didn't meet even their incredibly low standards for quality control. The enormous dome stood out in the morning haze, a looming monument to the failed Soviet-Cuban alliance.

That night on a dark street I passed a yellow-haired man with a round, Slavic face, and I impulsively shot out the only word of Russian I knew: *tovarish*, comrade. He spun round as suddenly as if he had been shot and stared at me, then burst into a rapid monologue in Russian.

Later, over dinner, he told me it had broken his heart when he discovered I wasn't actually a compatriot. He was dying to speak Russian and find out what was happening in Moscow. He couldn't tell if it was worse here or there, and he was deeply depressed. "I'm the last Russian," he said weepily. "Everyone else has gone home."

Shopping

The local chief of the bus station bypassed the ten-day waiting list and gave me a ticket for my next destination, Trinidad. I battled my way on board but didn't get a seat, and bounced for two hours along the coast, passing by half-cut canefields on one side and ocean breakers on the other. Trinidad, one of the first Spanish settlements in Cuba, was filled with elegant old houses and cobblestone streets.

Since the local tourist hotel was full, I was allowed to stay in the peso hotel on the plaza, a friendly dump used by Cubans in town for weddings or official business. The hotel was run by a wiry, silent man known only as Chief and a staff of six women. Chief gave me the best room in the house, with a balcony overlooking the plaza. There wasn't any water—hot or cold—but it was a nice view.

The room cost 12 pesos a night, or less than a dollar with my black-market currency, and when I paid the beautiful girl at the desk I slipped her a bar of soap under my passport. She held it for a moment, puzzled, and then smelled it. Her eyes went wide.

"Soap," she said reverently, as if I had handed her a large emerald. With effusive thanks, she told me that she hadn't been able to wash her daughter for more than two-and-a-half months. The shortages had hit her hard—wages from the hotel were low, and the child tore up clothing faster than her ration supplied it.

She took a deep breath and asked if I could do her a favor. She had a few dollars saved up—could I take it to the nearby tourist shop in the morning and buy a pair of shorts for the little girl? With little clue of what I was getting into, I said yes.

At breakfast the waitress was named Rosa. She weighed 200 pounds and kept winking at me. When I opened the menu a scrap of paper dropped out:

1 pants, size 16
2 tennis shoes, 38 or 39

Rosa winked again. When she brought the check I could see there was a lump underneath it, and I tried to palm it discreetly. Having no practice at this, I fumbled and dropped the little wad on the table. Rosa seemed about to faint. It was a tight roll of dollar bills. I scooped it into my pocket and Rosa recovered enough to wink again.

At lunch I had a different waitress, Mercedes, and when she brought the bill I turned it over and read:

1 tennis, 42
1 shirt
1 lipstick, red

I left the restaurant as fast as I could. A few minutes later there was a knock on my door. A gentle-looking young man apologized for disturbing me, but squeezed through the door as quickly as possible.

"I want you to know something," he said, "I am a Chris-

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tian." He brought out his wallet and showed me some little pictures of saints that he carried there. After a suitably reverent pause, he admitted that he needed some shoes.

I set off for the store with four lists and four little bundles of dollars and the conviction that I was about to be arrested for black marketeering. The merchandise was all remarkably cheap and ugly, but far better than what was available on the ration. I had plenty of time to shop, because a woman with an East German passport was buying half the store. She took fourteen shirts, six pairs of shoes, underwear, several pairs of bluejeans, lipstick, candy, Spanish olives, hand cream, ballpoint pens, and then paid with five crisp $50 bills. The clerks didn't blink an eye, so I stopped worrying about being arrested.

I was more terrified now of buying the wrong thing, wasting the precious dollars of one of the women. I raced back to the hotel and cornered Rosa and Mercedes and pleaded with them to be more specific. What kind of pants did they want, what color shoes, what amount should I spend on which?

"Anything," said Mercedes. "Black, red, blue, green, whatever you like!"

Rosa winked. "Whatever you think will look good on me," she said, falling into giggles.

In the end, it didn't matter. I returned to the hotel loaded down with bags of clothing, and the women were delighted. They squirreled away their sneakers and shirts where the Chief wouldn't see them, and giggled all afternoon. Whenever I passed by, Rosa would give me a huge wink.

He took out a faded picture from the wallet. "You know this fellow?" he asked. It was Che Guevara. "He was a good man. If he was still alive, none of this would be happening."

Pedro the *Gusano*

Another crowded but mercifully short bus trip brought me through the Escambray mountains to Santa Clara. It is a big university town, and there seemed to be something wrong with the place; the crowds were thick and noisy, and twice I saw arguments that turned too easily into fistfights.

In the plaza I met a *gusano*, a worm. That is Castro's term for people like Pedro, a 29-year-old who was sitting on a bench all morning. The factory where Pedro had worked assembling East German medical equipment closed a few months ago; now Pedro spent his days in the park, studying German and sipping from a plastic jug of beer. His father had gone to work in East Germany and now was refusing to come home. The sins of the father were visited upon the son; the Cuban authorities had cut off Pedro's mail and telephone. Pedro was labeled an anti-social delinquent and a *gusano*, and his application to join his father in Germany was rejected. He was subsisting on a government check for 50 pesos a month, about $2. The soles of his shoes were held on with string. At night he dreamed he was in a Munich beerhall with his father.

"Tell me this," Pedro said the first time we sat in the plaza together. "If I stood in the park in your country and said that the President, pardon my language, is a shit, what would happen?"

He seemed absolutely serious, so I told him that nothing would happen except maybe some polite applause. He didn't laugh.

"Incredible," he said, and he suddenly put his hands up and covered his face. After a moment, he spoke slowly and precisely, "I would give ten years of my life to live in a country like that." He took away his hands and I saw he was crying.

"I don't even have any shoes," he said, and began to sob.

Music

That night in Santa Clara I stumbled upon free speech. There was a sort of talent show in a local theater, and about three hundred young people were settled in, hoping for some excitement. The emcee hobbled out on a broken leg to introduce the show, and the first act came out, four actors dressed all in black. It was Cuban performance art; they began shouting "It's dangerous to shoot actors!" over and over while marching around the stage and menacing the audience. They kept that up for a few minutes, and then suddenly left to polite applause and great relief. They were followed by a bad folksinger, a comic who told an apparently hilarious story about a Cuban cow on vacation in India, another bad folksinger, a violin trio, and some dancers wrapped in white sheets.

Another guitarist came out and tuned up amid the murmuring of the crowd. When he struck the first chords and began to sing, the audience sat up. I scratched down as much of the lyric as could fit on a five-peso note, but it doesn't do the song justice:

I've been up at Varadero.
That sure is a nice hotel we've built there.
It's tall and pretty, with lots of glass.
I like to look at it from the street.

I've been up at Varadero,
Singing Guantanamera for the tourists.
I didn't see any taxis for me
But tourist taxis everywhere.

I've been up at Varadero.
I saw some pretty girls up there.
Hey girls, where are you going?
We're going to meet some foreign boys.

It wasn't exactly a revolution, but for Cuba it was strong stuff. Half the audience sat frozen, trying to catch the words, while the other half exploded in delight and be-

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gan clapping and singing along, particularly at the chorus:

Only tourist stores and tourist taxis—
I wish I could get a bus ticket.

They knew exactly what he was singing about, and when he left the stage, people reached out to shake his hand and pat him on the back.[1]

In the morning I met Pedro again in the plaza. He took a dog-eared newspaper clip out of his wallet. It was about anti-foreigner riots in Germany. Was his father safe? I tried to calm him down, but looking at the clips put him in a funk.

He took out a faded picture from the wallet. "You know this fellow?" he asked. It was Che Guevara. "He was a good man. If he was still alive, none of this would be happening."

He handed me the picture. "Keep it," he said, "and make me a promise. Promise me that when you go back to your country you will tell people what is going on here."

I promised, and Pedro sat back on the bench. "How long do you think we can live like this?" he asked.

Less than a year, I replied.

He began to laugh. "No, no, no," he gasped, as if it was the first funny thing he heard in months. "No, no, no. Fifteen years, we can last fifteen years like this," and he threw his head back and laughed some more.

Dialoguistas and Dissidents

Back in Havana I went to see Elizardo Sánchez, former professor of Marxist philosophy, frequent political prisoner, and now informal dean of Cuban dissidents. Sánchez has spent eight and a half of the last eleven years in jail, and when I knocked on the oversized door of his house in the neighborhood of La Playa his mother checked carefully before letting me inside. He met me in the front room, beneath a large picture of himself shaking hands with Ted Kennedy. "A friend," he explained.

If Sánchez has dubious friends, he certainly has excellent enemies. The leading ideological hack of the Communist party recently referred to him as "squalid counterrevolutionary garbage," and in Miami the exiles have tarred him with their worst epithet, *dialoguista*, someone who favors negotiating with Castro, a charge he denies. He says he does want an open national dialogue, because he is convinced that as in Eastern Europe, once a debate has begun, the Communists will be quickly forced out. "They had a dialogue in Nicaragua," he says. "They had a dialogue in Chile and Poland and Afghanistan. Why can't we have one here?"

[1]The singer told me I could describe the song as long as I did not use his name, and he vowed to send me the exact words in the mail. A few weeks after returning home I received a note without the lyric: "To my shame, I cannot send you my song in this letter for reasons of personal safety. I hope you can understand me, but I can say no more than this."

In the last battle of the Cold War, the middle is a dangerous place to be. In November and again in January, Sánchez was attacked by mobs in what the government called "spontaneous acts of repudiation." Up to 600 people demonstrated outside his house, chanting, taunting, hurling rocks and bottles, beating on the walls and smashing windows. Among the crowds were some of his neighbors—"They had to do it," he says—and men in civilian dress with radios. Sánchez took me back to the front door; there was a large crack in it, but he was proud that it had not broken. A black bootprint was visible beside the crack, testimony to the strength of the man who tried to break it down. "How many Cuban civilians have you seen wearing military boots recently?" Sánchez asked with a smile.

November was a bad month for the dissidents. The poet María Elena Cruz Varela received a visit from one of the pro-government mobs. They broke into her apartment, dragged her outside, tore up one of her books of poems and literally forced her to eat her words. Her offense was having written a letter to Fidel Castro:

Dear Mr. President:

I do not agree. I do not agree with the established disorder in my country. . . . I cannot agree with unfortunate slogans like "Fidel is our Papa. Fidel is the Papa of all Cubans."

My position is, *No, I don't agree* . . .

She is currently serving two years in prison.

The repression of dissidents is not a sideshow of Cuban politics, it is the soul. The government must constantly build up its enemies, Sánchez says, by claiming that even the mildest criticism is a CIA plot. The propaganda campaign rarely mentions socialism; instead Cubans are told that the nation itself is at stake, that Cuba's history and culture will somehow fall into the hands of foreigners if dissent is tolerated.

The government offers propaganda but backs it up with repression. Sánchez recites with weary familiarity the size and extent of Cuba's repressive machine—a massive military and police force, a system of domestic spies extending into every workplace and residential block, pro-government intimidation squads in every city, and more than 100 prisons and prison camps with roughly 100,000 prisoners.

"It is the most powerful repressive apparatus in the world, relative to our size," Sánchez says. "Ceausescu or Pinochet never had a system of vigilance on every block like this government. The situation here is comparable only to North Korea."

When I ask about the future, Sánchez frowns and plays with the tape recorder. The government remains strong, he says, and could last three more years. Still, this is the important year—what happens now determines how it will end. Castro is cornered, and will probably fight.

"I am not an optimist. The situation is going to change, it must change. If the government closes the non-violent door, there is only one door left—a bloody national tragedy."

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Zero Option

The next day my plane floated west toward Mexico at 10,000 feet. Thick columns of white smoke rose up from the fields of sugarcane below, which are burned at harvest time. Mountains of sugar are piling up on Cuba's docks; there are few Communist friends left to buy it. Only half the crop has been sold this year, but many of those deals are dubious. Penniless republics like Latvia and Khirghizstan will probably not be able to pay, according to sugar traders.

Without the sale of sugar there is no hard currency, no Ukrainian wheat or Russian oil or Hungarian tractors. The flow of tourists is expanding, but not fast enough to save the sinking economy.

Castro has always been smart, but even this problem is beyond him. The people of the island can only tighten their belts one or two more notches. To head off complaints, he has loudly warned everyone about the aptly named Zero Option, the worst-case scenario where the island would be without any fuel at all, a pre-industrial nightmare where horses and human muscle would power anything that can still move. The current shortages seem almost tolerable when viewed in light of the Zero Option.

Castro has been maneuvering at home and abroad to head off the coming crisis. He is throwing an election in October for the national assembly, a powerless body, but such a cosmetic change may release some pressure on the regime from sympathetic foreign governments. The spectacular show trial and execution in 1989 of General Arnaldo Ochoa was evidence that Castro is watching the military closely; Ochoa's real sin was apparently being too popular with the officer corps. He was arrested just a few days before taking command of the troops surrounding Havana.[2]

Castro has also gone to great pains to show he is no longer a threat to the United States; he has said repeatedly that the era of international adventures in Africa, Nicaragua, and El Salvador is over, and that Cuba and the United States are no longer enemies. He has become a diligent player in the drug war, trumpeting every smuggler captured in Cuban waters and firing off polite telexes to the U.S. with details.

This deathbed conversion from local hooligan to good neighbor is a sign of how desperate Castro is. Last fall, he hosted a conference on the lessons of the Cuban missile crisis with Kennedy administration veterans; he told them Kennedy was not only a fine man, but that he had promised a pact of nonintervention in Cuba, a pact that Castro nervously insisted is still valid.

He has reason to be nervous, but not about the United States. Fidel's problems are far closer to home. ❐

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[2] See Julia Preston's account in the *New York Review of Books*, December 7, 1989.

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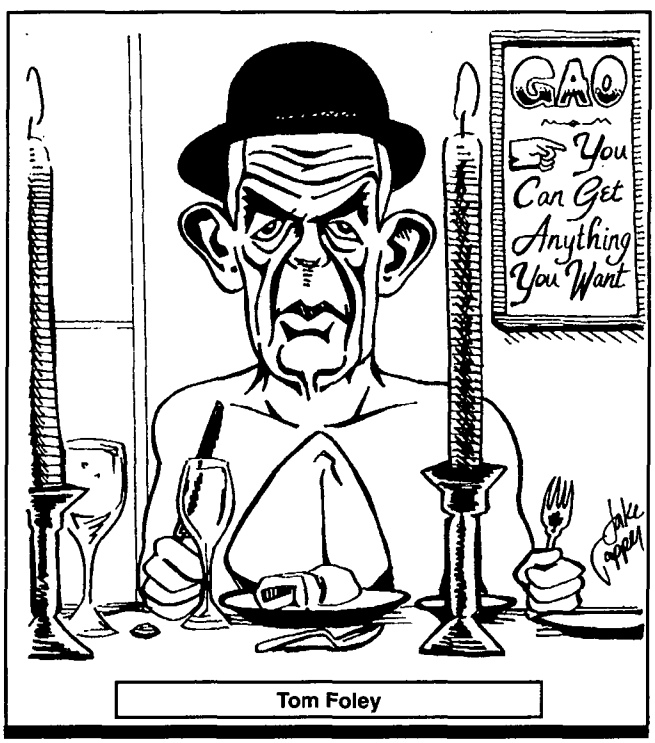
Edward McFadden

There's No Accounting for Congress

Especially if the GAO is cooking the numbers.



On Capitol Hill, the General Accounting Office has become the legislative-branch franchise of Alice's Restaurant. According to Sen. Christopher Bond (R-Mo.), "With the GAO, you can get anything you want. And if you don't know what the recipe is, they will make that up for you too." Bond laments the passing of what was once an unbiased, independent auditing agency.

Rep. Christopher Cox (R-Cal.) is even more pointed. "The GAO doesn't give us anything a good accounting firm in the private sector couldn't give us for less," he says. "What we're talking about here is part of a shadow executive branch."

In the past ten years, the General Accounting Office has entered into a very comfortable arrangement with Democrats in Congress. A congressional watchdog has become a Democratic lapdog. In many ways, the GAO has become the largest and most influential disinformation outlet for Democrats in Washington, covering up serious problems such as the recent House Bank scandal. Press accounts present the agency as a nonpartisan, vigilant office full of men and women with green eyeshades poring over budgets and expense accounts for waste or fraud and answering to no one. Maybe the picture fit twenty or thirty years ago, but no more.

Edward McFadden is a reporter in Washington, D.C.

The GAO was founded in 1921 to track and report federal expenditures for Congress. With the establishment of the Congressional Budget Office, the GAO's beat became sniffing out waste and fraud within the executive branch and—theoretically—Congress. It is now a $488-million, 5,000-employee bureaucracy with sixteen regional offices across the country and overseas; that excludes the more than 170 GAO staffers detailed to work for congressional committees at an annual cost of $4 million.

In the past two years, the GAO, led by Comptroller General Charles Bowsher, whom President Ronald Reagan appointed to a 15-year term in 1982, has performed more than 1,900 audits and investigative reports and testified more than 500 times before Congress. And whereas twenty years ago 80 percent of GAO's audits were performed independent of congressional request or assistance, in 1991 more than 80 percent of those audits and testimonies were requested by congressional committee chairmen and 90 percent of those came through the Democratic majority.

These statistics are important because of the role that the GAO plays in shaping legislation. Unlike other congressional agencies—the Congressional Budget Office and the Congressional Research Service—the GAO can make policy recommendations scripted by the audit's requester. For instance, audits of the Pentagon done for Armed Services chairman

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Les Aspin turned up $600 toilet seats and forced changes in bidding policies. More recently, the GAO audit of the Canadian health care system—requested by House Ways and Means chairman Dan Rostenkowski—has become the basis of a number of reform schemes. (The report has since been discredited by a series of reports from a GAO detailee to the House Committee on the Budget, which showed huge tax increases would result, but both Democratic presidential candidates continue to support the GAO model.)

Former GAO employees say one of the reasons the agency has been so easily coopted by congressional Democrats is the 94-percent retention rate of GAO staffers. "Once you begin your career there, you never leave," said a disenchanted former employee. "Most of these people have never held a job outside the GAO, and have no experiences other than GAO to relate their work to. After working there for twenty years, it is easy to become a drone for congressional work orders. You give Congress what it wants, because you would never dream of biting the hand that feeds you."

Nowhere has the GAO been more twisted and obfuscatory than in its investigation of the House Bank scandal in which it has hidden from public view a tradition of check-kiting, overdrafts, campaign-finance money-laundering, and possible illegal gambling and interest-free loans for re-election campaigns. With the scandal's spotlight currently on special prosecutor Judge Malcolm Wilkey, the GAO has managed to avoid scrutiny. But many of the answers to the special prosecutor's questions may lie in the thirty or so GAO audits of the House Bank obtained for this article. Going back as far as 1952, when the GAO began auditing the bank operated out of the Sergeant-at-Arms office, these audits reveal that the GAO and the office of the Speaker of the House have long been aware of check-kiting and overdrafts. Take the audit for the period January 4–July 3, 1952:

> It was noted that some Members still consistently overdraw their accounts, sometimes in excess of their monthly salary and expense allowances, while others make periodic overdrafts. Over sixty accounts showed overdrafts during the period of audit. Some former members continue to maintain active accounts with the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

The audit also revealed that some congressmen left blank, signed checks with the bank so that staff could fill in the amounts in case of overdrafts.

In every audit from 1952 on, the GAO staffers would pointedly reveal the continuing overdraft problem. In 1958, the auditor said, "Aside from the doubtful legality of accepting overdraft items and holding them for rather lengthy periods of time, the accounting control over the items is not adequate."

In 1961, the GAO began to cite explicit numbers—$610,000 on 5,221 worthless checks—and reported that half the members had overdrafts, many of them going unpaid for a month or more. Kite totals increased steadily until 1977—when GAO audits became public. Until then, audits had been submitted confidentially to the Speaker of the House. Now, the language and detailed information about the check-kiting mysteriously changed; under a note labeled "Accounts Receivable From Members," the text read:

> Amounts due from Members represent checks drawn on and cashed or paid by the Sergeant at Arms but not charged to Member's accounts. . . . The Sergeant at Arms monitors all such items daily, and no financial losses have occurred under these procedures.

Quite a change from the "questionable legality" language of twenty years before. It wasn't until the late-1989 audit—in which Speaker of the House Tom Foley claims he first "learned" of the overdraft problem and acted "within minutes"—that the GAO finally teed off on the House Bank and called for changes. Sergeant-at-Arms Jack Russ, who was bouncing large numbers of checks, informed the GAO and Foley that changes would be instituted to prevent further overdrafts. Those policies were never enacted.

"The GAO doesn't give us anything a good accounting firm in the private sector couldn't give us for less," Rep. Christopher Cox says. "What we're talking about here is part of a shadow executive branch."

Nor did the GAO check to see that they were. David Clark, the GAO staffer who oversaw the most recent audits, said that the year the reports became public, "we went to a new reporting format that eliminated a lot of the information that did not pertain to the bank's financial statement. The overdrafts simply didn't play a large role in what we were reporting. Therefore we didn't include that information in the report." Perhaps, but there is a simpler explanation, confirmed in interviews with legislators and staffers (but denied by a GAO spokesman)—GAO auditors were asked by Democratic House leaders to remove the documentation in a made-to-order audit.

"The relationship between GAO and Democratic leaders has gotten so that the agency will tailor-make the audit to the requester's liking," said a Republican congressman. "The ethics committee had all the draft work [for the 1991 audit] performed by GAO on the bank and the draft reports detailed a great deal more than any report that has been issued thus far. All of that information was cut by the GAO at the request of the House leadership prior to the audit's release. GAO simply couldn't withhold it unless it was told to."

The offices of House Minority Leader Robert Michel and three different senators have been trying for months to get copies of any GAO working papers and reports on the House Bank and have been denied access. Wilkey's

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staff is believed to have all that documentation now.

Another congressman says the GAO uncovered evidence of a numbers racket being run out of the Sergeant-at-Arms office. That information was edited out of the report. At least one congressman, Larry Smith (D-Florida), has announced his retirement from the House, evidently because of checks written to cover gambling debts, among other reasons. But the GAO didn't pick up on that; the *Miami Herald* did.

Personal vice on the part of elected officials is not necessarily the purview of the GAO, although it would have been difficult to miss. A bigger part of the story the GAO conveniently left out relates to the relationship between bounced checks and re-election campaigns. As the chart on page 27 shows, the GAO ignored a mysterious rise in check-bouncing levels each campaign season. In the annual audits of fiscal years leading up to re-election in November, the accounts receivable from members increase. During years with no re-election campaign, the accounts receivable decrease. Annual differentials are more subtle in some years, but still noticeable. Clark agreed that the differentials stood out, and said that auditors had noticed them, but "there really was nothing to it. The numbers could have meant anything."

That isn't what the special prosecutor thinks. A House staffer who has been monitoring the investigation says that it is now focusing on the theory that the bank became a means of providing interest-free loans for re-election campaigns, and a depository for cash deposits of large campaign donations. The *Miami Herald*, in its investigation of Smith, alleged that he funneled campaign funds through his House bank account.

There is mounting evidence in the hands of Wilkey that there was an intricate campaign fund–laundering technique practiced through the House Bank and House Post Office. A check made out to a re-election campaign would be cashed for stamps at the House Post Office. A day later, the House Post Office would buy back the stamps for cash, which would then be deposited in the House Bank. One House source says, "There were a lot of checks written in very round numbers—$1,000, $3,000, or $5,000. Not the kind of numbers one normally writes out to pay off a grocer's bill. More importantly, a large number of those checks are believed to have been made out for cash. The fact that that information will come out has a lot of people nervous around here because you have to wonder why someone would want that kind of money hanging around a House office."

Already, federal prosecutors have caught on to this scam, and have subpoenaed the office records of Ways and Means chairman Rostenkowski and two Democratic congressmen from Pennsylvania. Those subpoenas were issued May 6, but were not made public until May 14 by Foley, who said it was an "oversight" that Republicans were not informed at the time they were issued.

Clark said that the GAO auditors would not have looked into these allegations because it was not part of the procedure the GAO followed in auditing the bank, and said his agency was simply fulfilling the audit request put forth by the Speaker's office. The credit for bringing these scams to light belongs to the staff of the House Administration Committee, which is supposed to oversee the Sergeant-at-Arms. Working, ironically, with a GAO detailee, committee staffers began examining the bank in 1989 after Foley and the GAO refused to provide the committee with full audits of the bank. Only after staff discovered the seriousness of the bank problem did the GAO catch on that a more illuminating audit might have to be performed. The GAO's auditing of the bank had slipped so badly that in 1988, for instance, there was no mention whatsoever of a check-bouncing problem.

Yet take the GAO off the congressional beat and watch it become a pit bull of an auditing agency. This GAO is a tenacious, even vindictive body, known to hound other agencies for years:

- In a clear example of partisan retaliation for the bank scandal, the GAO is in the midst of a comprehensive audit—requested by the House leadership—of the perks "abused" by members of the executive branch and the Bush Administration. Democrats are hoping to have the report ready prior to the report issued by the special prosecutor in the House Bank scandal. The only problem with this audit is that all of the so-called perks available to the executive branch are theoretically examined, audited, and approved by Congress annually through the budget process.

Democrats may think they can win the perk war by using the GAO, but they had better tread lightly. The Defense Department has compiled detailed documentary evidence showing how seriously Congress abused its own privileges regarding the use of military jets. The GAO has completed its own report on congressional flights, but Democrats are holding up its release.

- During Operation Desert Storm, two GAO auditors showed up on the front lines to inform Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf that they wanted to observe the Apache helicopter under wartime conditions. The GAO had an axe to grind. It had earlier recommended ending the Apache program and, after its initial report was ignored, continued to investigate, citing congressional interest. When the two auditors found nothing amiss during their initial meeting with Schwarzkopf, they showed up again two days later, saying they had been "misled" on their first visit. Again, nothing wrong was detected with the helicopters. Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) remarked, "What the GAO is doing in a war zone, occupying limited military resources that clearly had more pressing requirements, boggles my mind."
- In 1989, North Dakota Democrats Sen. Kent Conrad and Rep. Byron Dorgan jointly requested a GAO investigation into a drought's effect on the Missouri River basin. At the time, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana were suing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over who controlled the flow and level of the river. The upriver states wanted the Corps to allow less water to flow out their reservoirs so that the states' boating and recreation businesses would flourish. The downriver states, mainly Missouri, wanted the river flow to remain at its normal level. The GAO found in favor of the

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upstream states and the report's finding was trumpeted by North Dakota as proof its lawsuit had merit.

But an investigation by Christopher Bond's office revealed that the GAO had based its analysis and recommendations on a law review article written and provided to the GAO by South Dakota Assistant Attorney General John Guhin, a Democrat. The GAO never bothered to confirm the article's facts. In accepting Guhin's article, GAO refused to accept written comments from the Corps of Engineers, and did not consider a widely accepted research paper on the drought's effects on the river issued by the University of Missouri, nor did it interview the appropriate government officials in the downriver states.

Under pressure from Bond's office, the GAO acknowledged its source for the report was the article. After Bond's office released a 45-page report on the inaccuracies of the audit, the GAO admitted the report was incomplete but insisted that "our report is consistent with GAO's responsibilities." Bowsher refused to withdraw the report, which should come as no surprise: in his ten years of stewardship, a GAO report has never been withdrawn due to errors of fact or incomplete research. The GAO got even with Bond by "randomly" selecting Missouri for an audit on the benefits accruing to states from federal agencies based in them.

Bond sees Bowsher as part of the problem, a far cry from 1982, when Republicans thought he would be an ally in leveling the GAO playing field. A longtime government comptroller and senior member of the Arthur Anderson accounting firm, Bowsher had gained Ronald Reagan's attention in 1979 as a major fund-raiser for the Reagan presidential campaign.

Former GAO staffers say Bowsher simply couldn't deal with the permanent bureaucratic establishment of the GAO. Early in his tenure, Bowsher tried to introduce a salary system that would reward quality work, but the plan was blocked and killed by GAO assistant directors. The former staffers point to assistant director of human resources Lawrence Thompson as a reason for the close Democratic ties. He is said to be a major Democratic player who encourages the intimate links between Democratic committee chairmen and the agency.

• In May 1991, the GAO performed an audit of a NASA space station proposal for Barbara Boxer (D–Cal.). NASA officials assisted the auditors in preparing the report, but when NASA asked to receive a copy of the final product prior to the hearings of the House Science and Technology Committee, GAO refused, saying Boxer would not allow it. (The ability to block a report's issuance is one of the perks GAO provides requesters. Again, it is common for GAO auditors to work closely with the requesters to shape reports in a way that is satisfactory and useful to the legislator or committee. If a report does not meet with requester approval, it is never publicly released, even if the information is in the public's or Congress's interest.) →

Was the House Bank a Campaign Chest?

A pattern of unusually high accounts due during election seasons.

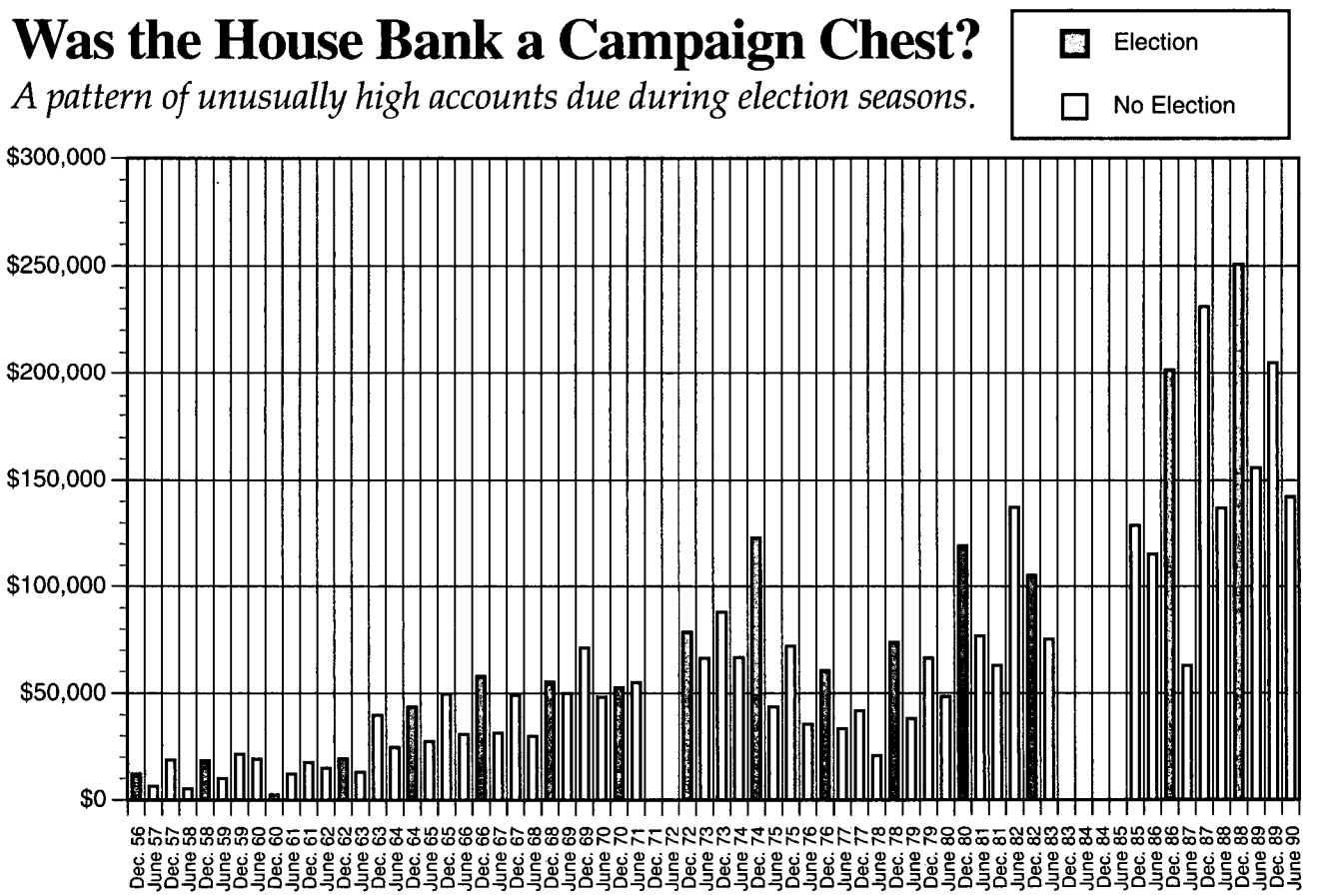

*Chart based on GAO statistics. Columns blank where no data available.

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The report stated that NASA had grossly underestimated the cost of building a space station, and NASA had no way of preparing a rebuttal. NASA officials *did* see portions of the report—for either Boxer or the GAO leaked a copy to the *Washington Post*, which ran it as a page-one story the morning of the hearing. "After several weeks we were finally able to show that GAO's numbers were off and that they had fudged the numbers, combined some figures, and ended up with this huge price tag," says Rep. Robert Walker (R–Penn.), a member of the House Government Operations Committee in the mid-1980s who has since resigned from it. "But by then, it was too late, the damage was done." Funding for the space station remains inadequate, and NASA says the project is no longer taken seriously.

Walker says he saw many GAO reports and audits that were incomplete, misleading, and prepared through a "group-participation process" that included only Democratic legislators and staffers. When he had occasion to deal with the GAO himself, he was told to take a hike. "I had solid evidence and information leading me to believe that 75 percent of Congress was not following its own drug-free policy guidelines, and GAO refused the audit," he says. According to the GAO, Walker was not entitled to make the request because he was not a ranking member of the Government Operations Committee. But when Walker asked if the House Minority Leader could request the audit, the GAO replied that only the Speaker of the House could make such a request. Walker says that the GAO can still perform top-notch work when both parties are allowed to participate—as, for example, in the cooperation shown by the GAO detailee in the House Administration Committee's look into the House Bank. But Walker, Domenici, and Bond insist that those situations occur infrequently, mainly because of the abuse of GAO staffing policies that detail employees to committees.

Sen. Pete Domenici remarked, "What the GAO is doing in a war zone, occupying limited military resources that clearly had more pressing requirements, boggles my mind."

When the GAO details a staffer to a committee, that auditor technically no longer works for the GAO, even though the salary is paid through the agency. The chairman of a committee makes the request to GAO for the assignment, and requires the approval of the committee's ranking minority party member. An unscientific poll of committees with GAO detailees showed that fewer than five of the Democrat-requested GAO personnel were signed off by Republican members of the committee—in other words, the policy is ignored. Also ignored is the courtesy notification that a GAO audit has been requested. Cox, the ranking Republican on Government Operations, says he often finds out about GAO reports only on the day they are released to committees.

On the House Government Operations Committee, the Democratic staff is eighty-two members strong, compared to seventeen for Republicans. In addition, the committee has twenty-six GAO detailees, *who work for the Democrats exclusively*. Rep. John Dingell, the formidable chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, has twenty-two detailees at his service; Republicans on that committee have none. Of the 127 current GAO detailees—on average there are 172 annually—not one has been provided to Republican committee members or staff and only one detailee was approved for the Republicans. Last year, Republicans requested a three-percent increase in their overall committee staff. The request was denied by the House leadership.

If a committee chairman doesn't approach the GAO with the idea, the GAO staffers know that they can approach the chair just as easily. GAO auditors hot to investigate a certain subject regularly shop their ideas to either Rep. John Conyers of Government Operations or Dingell for a detail assignment. "Both men jump at the idea. It's almost a game to them to see which one can snap up the GAOer first," said a committee staffer. "They don't want to possibly miss out on a juicy report." One such audit was performed for Dingell. Even though the GAO has a fully staffed outpost in Germany, detailees approached Dingell with an idea to examine the Securities and Exchange Commission's International Cooperative Agreements, and off they went on a free tour of European capitals.

Cleve Corlett, a spokesman for the GAO, is candid enough when he says the relationship between his agency and the Democrats "was bound to happen, given the length of time the committees have been controlled by Democrats." It's a theme that insurgent Republicans like House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich have been playing up for years now. In a round of tough talk after the bank scandal broke earlier this year, Gingrich said his side of the aisle would just "sit back and wait for the political fallout to occur." Only after the Democrats were suitably weakened, he said, would the Republicans come to the negotiating table on such issues as equitable staffing policies and relations with the congressional agencies. Unfortunately, Gingrich has not addressed the GAO problem, and it's been up to Republicans like Bond, Cox, Domenici, and Walker to keep the issue alive.

But let us not forget that most Republicans in Congress are not insurgents. More typical are the three congressmen who asked that their names not be used in this article, for fear of Democratic and GAO retribution. It's the sort of attitude that will lead Republicans to squander an election year tailor-made for them. The fast-fact joint known as the GAO, it's safe to say, will remain Democrat-owned and operated for many years to come. On Capitol Hill, that's one thing you can still bank on. ❐

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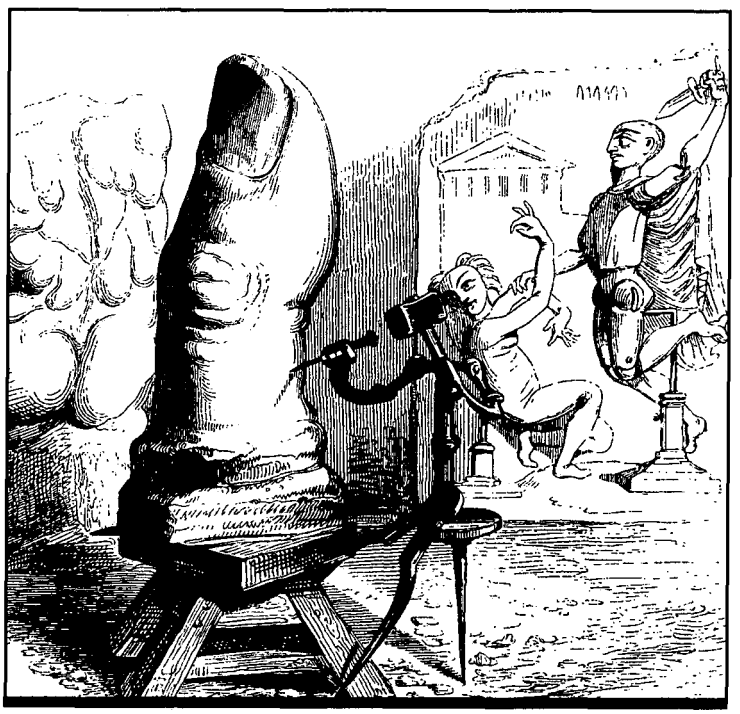
Michael Fumento

Fetal Attraction

If fetal cells are as medically useful as some doctors think, we could soon have a bull market in abortion-for-profit. And that's only one of the ethical problems.



Not long ago, brain transplants seemed the stuff of cheap science fiction. The scientific consensus has long been that once a brain begins to go, there is no restoring it, that the billions of cells the brain has at birth gradually die off through life and are not replaced, regardless of whether one killed the cells through drinking, boxing, or simply growing older. But it now appears possible that, for victims of Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and other brain diseases, fresh cells grafted into the brain can stimulate functions once thought lost. Cells taken from fetuses are preferred for such grafts for two major reasons: they proliferate, and they are less likely to be rejected by the cell recipient.

Fetal transplants could herald a new age in medicine, with benefits to victims of Huntington's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), Alzheimer's disease, strokes, blindness, and traumatic brain injury. They could also usher in a Brave New World. According to ethicist Arthur Caplan of the Hastings Center outside New York: "The use of fetuses as organ and tissue donors is a ticking time bomb of bioethics."

Soon, that bomb may go off. In 1988, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) banned government funding of experimentation on transplants of human fetal tissue. But late last year, the House of Representatives passed legislation that would lift the ban. In early April, the Senate did likewise by a veto-proof majority. The House may give the final version that comes out of the conference committee the two-thirds approval it needs to slide past the President. George Bush has said he will veto such legislation, but both bills include other funding the President would be loath to reject.

Michael Fumento is a science and economics reporter for Investor's Business Daily *in Los Angeles.*

Cell Transplants for Brain Disease

Parkinson's disease, thought to afflict as many as a million Americans, most of them over 60, is characterized by tremors and lack of muscular control. While we have no precise functional explanation for it, it results from progressive loss of nerve cells that produce the neurotransmitter dopamine in the midbrain's substantia nigra. The normal treatment is to give Parkinson's patients levadopa (L-dopa), which supplements reduced dopamine levels. The effect is dramatic but temporary, lasting perhaps a few years.

One alternative is the implantation of dopamine-producing tissue into the brain as a "pump." Since the central part of the adrenal glands—the medulla—produces dopamine, scientists have tried to implant adrenal "autografts" (meaning from the same person) into the caudate nucleus. Early autograft experimentation with both rats and humans proved unsuccessful in restoring normal functions.

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For example, in 1986 a team led by Dr. René Druck-Colin of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México autografted adrenal cells into patients' brains, claiming at first a miraculous effect. All twenty subjects showed dramatic improvement in the course of weeks, and many returned almost to normal. But since then, approximately 180 Parkinson's patients in the United States and Canada were given the adrenal implants, yet they experienced only modest benefits.

Researchers thus looked at fetal tissue. Human fetal tissue transplants have been tried for diabetes, severe combined immunodeficiency, DiGeorge's syndrome, aplastic anemia, leukemia, thalassemia, Fabry's disease, and Gaucher's disease. They have had modest success with immunodeficiency disorders—achieving restoration of immune function and long-term patient survival—but failed elsewhere. For example, by the end of 1989, cultured fetal pancreas cells had been transplanted in more than a hundred insulin-dependent diabetics, with the best case having been the survival of transplanted fetal pancreas tissue for thirteen weeks.

According to the Council on Scientific Affairs of the American Medical Association, there have been at least a hundred attempts to engraft fetal tissue to treat aplastic anemia, and thirty-nine attempts to use human fetal implants for leukemia, but the technique has not been feasible without recourse to severe immunosuppressant drugs and radiation.

It now appears that, for victims of Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and other brain diseases, fresh cells grafted into the brain can stimulate functions once thought lost.

It is as a treatment for Parkinson's disease that fetal cell transplants have received the most attention. In early 1990, eleven Swedish researchers reported some success transplanting fetal nerve tissue into the brain of a man with severe Parkinson's disease. "The improvement clearly has been of value to him," said Olle Lindvall, chief author of the Swedish report, to a *Science* reporter. The Lindvall group said it had given the fetal grafts to three other patients, but that none had been monitored long enough to determine whether the grafts were successful. The Swedish report followed on the heels of transplants at the Yale Medical School and the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

The Fetal Research Ban

Since 1972, fetal research has been permitted in the United States and several countries under certain conditions. The current ban stems from research proposals considered by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in October 1987. In March 1988, under pressure from Reagan appointees, NIH ordered a moratorium on research. It summoned an advisory group, the Human Fetal Tissue Transplantation Research Panel (HFTTRP), to consider the ethical issues. The panel voted 17-4 to lift the ban. One of the three dissenters, James Bopp, general counsel for the National Right to Life Committee, charges that the "vast majority" of panel members were pre-selected by the panel's chairman of scientific issues Kenneth Ryan, its chairman of ethical and legal issues LeRoy Walters, and others at NIH who favor fetal cell transplants. If not for the intercession of some congressmen, Bopp says, the panel would have been "completely lopsided." Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan rejected the panel's recommendation, and was joined in this decision by Assistant Secretary for Health Dr. James Mason. Although the AMA's Council of Judicial and Ethical Affairs reacted swiftly to denounce the moratorium, the administration seems firm in maintaining it.

Abortion and Fetal Ethics

"Unconscionable" is a term used by both sides in the fetal tissue debate. There seems to be no argument over the use of tissue obtained after a miscarriage; in such cases, the woman's proxy consent is comparable to the consent of a parent to organ or tissue donation from her child. But the wide-scale use of miscarriages is impractical. Collection of fetuses is difficult, and whatever killed the fetus can cause any number of problems with the brain tissue. The real debate is over elective abortions. Can a woman who has decided to kill a fetus be in a position to act in its best interests?

The HFTTRP okayed fetal research only if the use of the tissue were approved by the pregnant woman and if such use could be completely dissociated from the decision to abort. The panel proposed several insulating measures, including prevention of commercialization, periodic review, careful monitoring of scientific quality, and forbidding the pregnant woman to designate a recipient.

The panel recommended that "even the provision of preliminary information for tissue donation" not be volunteered to pregnant women, but Bopp argues that since the use of fetal tissue, if it proved successful, would be common knowledge, no information would be needed. Eleven members thought the information should be given to a woman considering abortion if she asked first. The panel asserted that, even "if there were a substantial increase in the number of abortions, it still would not follow that fetal tissue transplant research and therapy should not occur."

A widely used justification for cell transplants from abortions is that they are analogous to transplants from auto accident victims. Opponents counter that in a traffic accident, at least, someone other than the agent of death authorizes organ retrieval. Dr. Kathleen Nolan, then at the Hastings Center, wrote in the journal *Transplantation Proceedings*: "Without taking any position on the morality of elective abortion, one can still observe that results from this procedure are volition-

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al in ways distinct from those caused by highway and other accidents." But ethicist John Robertson of the University of Texas replied:

> The argument that the woman's decision to abort disqualifies her from playing any role in disposition of fetal remains is unpersuasive. It overlooks her continuing interest in what happens to fetal tissue. It also mistakenly assumes that a person who disposes of cadaveric remains acts as a guardian or proxy for the deceased, who has no interests . . . in what happens to those remains. . . . It would lead either to a policy of using fetal remains without parental consent or to a total ban on fetal transplants.

Yet a woman electing to abort her fetus has *abandoned* her interest in what happens to fetal tissue. As then-President Reagan put it in a letter, "The use of any aborted child for these purposes raises the most profound ethical issues, especially because the person who would ordinarily authorize such use—the parent—deliberately renounces parenthood by choosing an abortion." In real life this is clearly the case: abortion clinics do not make a habit of asking patients how they wish the remains to be disposed.

Human fetal tissue transplants have been tried for diabetes, severe combined immunodeficiency, DiGeorge's syndrome, aplastic anemia, leukemia, thalassemia, Fabry's disease, and Gaucher's disease.

Incentive for Abortions?

Anti-abortionists worry that fetal cell transplants will provide moral backing for abortion. As the *National Right to Life News* stated, "Using fetal tissue to 'help' people will convert abortion, in many people's minds, into a kind of neighborly gesture, and the local abortionist into Marcus Welby."

Reports have surfaced on women who considered getting pregnant to provide tissue for treatment. One young woman said on ABC's "Nightline" that she would do so for the sake of her father, a Parkinson's sufferer. Bioethicists have called such a stance ethical, and some diabetic women are said to have considered impregnation in order to produce tissue for self-treatment. This has led one proponent of fetal cell transplants to conclude that the fear "that the use of fetal tissue for transplantation . . . could become an incentive for abortion . . . appears well grounded."

Science magazine editor Daniel Koshland, Jr. disagrees: "Taking the kidney from a brain-dead victim of an automobile crash has not led scientists to encourage automobile accidents, and fetal tissue can be used without reference to the arguments surrounding induced abortion."

"A woman wants an abortion because she wants an abortion," says Robin Duke, co-chairman of the Population Crisis Committee in New York City. "A woman wants an abortion because she doesn't feel this is the time to give birth. . . . There are myriad reasons for abortion. To produce fetal tissue for research is not one of them." But even Duke thinks there will be economic pressures on abortion clinics to procure and sell fetal tissue.

This is one of the areas that most worries transplant opponents—anti-abortion and pro-abortion alike—and proponents. Some of the latter argue that "clear legal prohibitions on buying fetal tissue" would eliminate financial incentives. The National Organ Transplant Act now makes payment of "valuable consideration" for the donation or distribution of specific fetal organs and "any subparts thereof" a federal crime, as do many states. Others, however, fear a black market. Kidneys for transplantation from live donors in Brazil and India have been advertised for sale in Germany, and Arthur Caplan, who addressed the HFTTRP panel, has acknowledged that "poor women in nations where markets are permitted in organs and tissues might seek abortions solely for financial gain. . . . Policies aimed at maximizing the utilization of infants as donors could lead to increases in the number of elective abortions."

Tissue sales could be highly profitable. Hana Biologics, Inc. of California has estimated that the total potential market in treating diabetes and Parkinson's disease with fetal tissue exceeds $6 billion. Although Hana is no longer in the business, it was selling insulin-producing cells at several thousand dollars per treatment. Abortion clinics gross perhaps $250 million annually from first-trimester abortions (1.4 million abortions a year at $175 each). Nonprofit fetal organ acquisition organizations now offer $25 per fetal organ. Since at least four fetal organs are being procured—the pancreas, brain, adrenal gland, and liver—abortion clinics could increase their profits tremendously.

And if the transplants proved successful, supply wouldn't meet demand. The aforementioned Swedish team has been experiencing survival of dopamine at only one to five percent, making it likely that cells from several donors would be needed to replenish lost dopamine neurons. Assuming survival at the rate Lindvall has claimed (and critics like William Landau say that's optimistic), only 10,280 of 500,000 Parkinson's disease patients could expect fetal transplants, and there are at least a million people in the country with Parkinson's. There are 300,000 victims of spinal injuries; 10,000 victims of hemophilia, muscular dystrophy, and Huntington's disease; and 2.5 million victims of Alzheimer's.

Pro-Abortion, Anti-Transplant

Although each side thinks the other obsessed with abortion, some see the issue of whether fetal transplants will lead to more abortions as irrelevant. Dr. Robert Levine of the Yale University School of Medicine, for example, told the *Washington Post*:

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> The law does not prescribe motivations for conceiving a fetus. Most of us grew up with an understanding of why one was conceived. Most commonly, it is to have a baby. When one says, "Let's have a fetus so we can get substantia nigra after we abort it," that somehow strikes us as alien. [But] by what grounds can we say it is wrong? It is not illegal.

He continued: "Although the morality of abortion has always figured in the debate over the ethical permissibility of fetal research, it is notable that those who oppose the transplantation of fetal tissues seem to consider it the only issue."

In fact, some of the more outspoken foes of the procedure are ardently pro-abortion. They worry about coercion of the pregnant woman. Gena Corea, author of *How American Medicine Mistreats Women*, has stated, "Women will be pressured by doctors and families, or by economic need, to become fetal factories." Janice Raymond, a professor of women's studies and medical ethics at the University of Massachusetts, also supports the research moratorium. Raymond fears that women will be persuaded by sick family members or by promises of payment not only to have abortions but even to become pregnant in order to have one. According to Raymond,

> The context in which this is [occurring] is that there is already organ trafficking and adoption trafficking and trafficking of women for prostitution and reproductive purposes. These technologies enhance that trafficking. . . . Women are now the resource for embryos, tissue, and surrogate wombs. A woman's body has become a kind of field to be harvested. Mothers are no longer mothers, they're intrauterine environments.

Raymond distances herself from pro-lifers. "The right opposes [fetal cell transplants] because of the harvesting of fetuses, but feminists oppose it because it's the harvesting of women."

Even the *Progressive* has come out against selling fetal tissue, referring to those who would do so as "flesh peddlers." The magazine was highly critical of a woman who reportedly wanted a doctor to artificially inseminate her so that she could donate fetal cells to her father, who had Alzheimer's.

One way to determine whether fetal cell transplantation is an incentive to abort is to ask people. A substantial number say it is. Eighty percent of students surveyed in Cincinnati and El Paso answered that they thought fetal transplant surgery should be performed in the United States. Ten percent said they would approve of the selling of fetal tissue, 11 percent said they would intentionally become pregnant or get a wife pregnant to abort and donate tissue to a parent. One percent of the women said they would abort their own fetus for money, while two percent of the men supported the idea. A poll of *Glamour* readers (presumably virtually all female) found that 69 percent favored the use of fetal tissue for medical research. Eight percent said they would be more likely to abort if they had an opportunity to donate fetal tissue. Four percent said women should be allowed to profit from the sale of their aborted fetuses.

Should the Fetus Be Viable?

There is no consensus on what age fetal cells are best to transplant; it seems to depend on the type of operation involved. Dr. Curt R. Freed, a professor of medicine and pharmacology at the University of Colorado in Denver and one of the top fetal cell transplant researchers in the U.S., reported in the *Archives of Neurology* (as did S.B. Blunt in the *Lancet*) that for Parkinsonism, cells from early gestation appear best. For humans, this would be tissue from a first-trimester fetus. Abortions performed at fourteen to sixteen weeks, the second trimester, have been standard for providing tissue used in pancreatic transplant experiments for diabetes, although it may eventually prove possible to use pancreases retrieved earlier.

Transplant opponents claim the best tissue is yielded by older fetuses and that most abortions as currently done would not be suitable for tissue collection. This bothers pro-lifers, who believe that the more developed the fetus, the more heinous the act. Feminists like Raymond worry because later abortions mean a greater chance for complications. They also fear that unsafe abortion techniques will be used with the sole intent of keeping the fetus intact.

There is clearly some truth to this last allegation. The standard type of abortion, suction aspiration, uses a vacuum cleaner–like tube with a sharp edge. The fetus is chopped into pieces only slightly larger than hamburger, making brain tissue difficult to locate. For ethical reasons, Freed said, his team would not have a woman alter her type of abortion to accommodate their research, but he also said this made their job considerably more difficult. For purposes of conducting one experimental transplant, a medical team can afford to wade through the remains of five or ten fetuses, but certainly if transplants became common, pressure would be put on a woman to forgo suction aspiration in favor of dilation and curettage (D&C), a considerably more dangerous procedure in which the doctor uses a sharp instrument to slice the fetus up by hand and withdraw the parts.

And should the fetus be viable? This is not the standard meaning of "viability" in abortion issues, which refers to when a fetus is mature enough to survive outside the womb. Viability in this sense means whether the fetus is biological-

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ly alive. The adult human brain, when deprived of oxygen, begins to decay in a matter of minutes. It appears that fetal cells last substantially longer. Further, the cells can be quickly frozen and thawed for later use.

Nevertheless, if live fetuses must be used, that is something that some proponents of fetal cell transplants would find tolerable. Writing in the *Hastings Center Report*, three of them stated, "We believe . . . that use of essential organs or tissue from nonviable fetuses is morally defensible if dead fetuses are not available or are not conducive to successful transplants." They grant that pulling the brains out of live fetuses could prove painful, but say this "may be satisfactorily addressed on a practical level by using anesthesia."

The German Experience

Opponents of fetal cell transplantation sometimes liken it to the use of Holocaust victims' bodies. They cite an incident investigated by the late Dr. Leo Alexander for the Nuremberg tribunal involving Professor Julius Hallervorden, who was shipped 600 preserved brains of "mercy death" victims for his research in neuropathology. Interviewed by Alexander, the doctor explained that he hadn't authorized the victims' murder and that it would have been a pity to waste "wonderful material" of incalculable benefit to science. Dr. August Hirt felt similarly: "These condemned men will at least make themselves useful. Wouldn't it be ridiculous to execute them and send their bodies to the crematory oven without giving them an opportunity to contribute to the progress of society?"

According to John Robertson, the Nazi analogy is inapposite. "The Nazi experiments that were so revolting were carried out on live patients and clearly harmed them. No doctors were convicted at Nuremberg war trials for making use of cadaveric remains from the unethical experiments carried out by other physicians." Not convicted, perhaps, but it is widely held that it was immoral to make use of the bodies, and that a lack of a strong connection between those who did the executing and those who might benefit from it is irrelevant. In 1988, eighteen staff members at the Environmental Protection Agency called for a halt in the application of Nazi research data from experiments with phosgene gas on prisoners of war. Their misgiving was that "to use such data debases us all as a society, gives such experiments legitimacy, and implicitly encourages others, perhaps in less exacting societies, to perform unethical human experiments."

Do the Transplants Work?

Then there are those like Dr. William Landau, head of the Department of Neurology at Washington University in St. Louis, who thinks that the talk about ethics is all quite superfluous for one reason: the public perception that fetal cell transplantation is a proven, if experimental, technology isn't true. "This is absolute science fiction," says Landau. "There's no evidence that the brain can be transplanted functionally in an animal and it will work. The brain is a unique organ that doesn't regenerate new cells and this isn't going to be changed by anybody."

Some of what lies behind this perception appears to be advocacy. Even science journals have given in to boosterism. *Science* stated in a 1990 news article: "The results of such surgery are undeniably dramatic: Patients whose movements have been impaired for decades by the disorder have been returned to near normal functioning by dopamine-secreting tissues transplanted directly into their brains. And yet, the method has been politically and ethically sensitive."

Contrast that with the subtitle of an editorial in the August 1990 *British Medical Journal*: "More Patients Have Probably Been Harmed Than Helped, So Far," or the 1988 *Science News* article, "Fetal Cell Transplants Show Few Benefits." The very printing of the Lindvall study may reflect *Science*'s advocacy. Says Dartmouth Associate Professor of Neurology Richard Harbaugh, "I think if you went back through thirty years of *Science* and tried to find another single patient case report, unblinded and uncontrolled, you couldn't do it. For something like this to be in *Science* is unheard of."

The hype may also have a political bent. In order to circumvent the FDA's ban on the French abortifacient RU-486, abortion activists have readily grabbed at whispers of evidence that the drug "may" have properties that "may" make it effective against AIDS, cancer, and other diseases. Those arguing for less destruction of the Brazilian rain forests are now advertising that among the unknown plants therein "may" be a cure for AIDS and cancer. In the broadest sense of the word "may," these assertions "may" prove correct. But they do not reflect scientific trial and error so much as the reality that for every disease you claim you "may" have a cure for, you pull in a constituency.

Landau has no doubt that the temptation to exaggerate has been succumbed to. He says he has no ethical problems with using aborted fetuses for either experimentation or therapy—the real ethical problem is chopping holes in the brains of people who are not terminally ill when adequate animal studies have not even been performed. Writing in the May 1990 issue of *Neurology*, Landau said, "This is not just an issue of bent statistics. Rather, it is one of lost scientific principles."

Landau, who has researched Parkinsonism for thirty years, is well aware of the pressures on researchers to produce positive results. He accuses no fetal cell researchers of trying to deceive anyone—other than perhaps themselves. He says that researchers are not following basic scientific procedures, and believes that Parkinson's patients benefit simply from surgical damage in the brain that is made in the course of transplants:

> There's no evidence that the transplant experiments in animals or man show anything other than the benefits of these cuts. . . . It's my belief, based on my knowledge of biology, that it won't work. The likelihood that tissue will make a functional connection with the way other cells work is improbable. The circuitry of the brain is complex. It's not like putting a piece of liver into another liver. There are different types of tissue in the brain. I

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can't conceive of how infantile brain cells stuck in an adult brain will make proper connections.

On May 10, the *Los Angeles Times* ran an editorial entitled "More Proof, Though None Is Needed," urging President Bush to lift the fetal transplant ban. It based its argument on two studies released a few days earlier at a San Diego convention updating the fetal cell transplant experiments in Colorado and at Yale. The editorial reported that some of the patients given cells had improved, without noting that the control patients in the Yale study—those who had not received fetal cells—had also improved, a result that calls into question the effectiveness of fetal cell transplants. It also neglected to mention a study headed up by New York University neurosurgeon Michael Dogali, in which patients with Parkinsonism who had small pieces of their brains removed showed significant improvement. One researcher on the experiment, neurologist Enrico Fazzini, said that outcome perhaps indicated that the improvement noted in the Denver and Yale patients was caused not by fetal cells but by the cuts themselves, as Landau has hypothesized. It seems that despite its claims to the contrary, the *L.A. Times* will need more proof.

Landau says that one means by which fetal cell transplants could conceivably work would be by acting as a pump, as with diabetes patients. "But the cells injected have to be able to react to blood sugar the way normal cells do," and this could be problematic. "On the other hand, maybe they wouldn't regulate but could serve as reservoir. But then why not just put a slow-leaking bottle of levadopa into the brain?" (In fact, pocket-sized insulin pumps for diabetics will soon be in general use.) "The irreversible tragedy is the death and damage to many patients and their families produced by the extravagance of the transplantation fad," he said.

At the 1989 annual meeting of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons in Washington, D.C., as the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) put it, "The consensus [was] that while [grafting] is still promising, particularly when fetal brain tissue is grafted, new side effects are continuing to emerge." Specifically noted was the breaking of the blood-brain barrier that persisted for several months after surgery in six patients. Such breaches can prove fatal.

Rejected Tissue

In general, fetal neural cells are less likely to cause rejection than adult tissue from another person. They often fail to cause significant immune responses when implanted in rodents and apes, and have been used in successful human operations without immune suppression. However, animal studies comparing the immunogenicity of fetal pancreas with adult pancreas cells show that the fetal tissue can be as immune-incompatible, if not more so, than adult tissue. Fetal liver cells have also prompted immune responses.

Researcher George Allen, of the Vanderbilt University Medical School, head of the most experienced American group in brain graft therapy, says: "Putting aside the practical and ethical problems of getting donor tissue . . . there is the issue of graft rejection. We've seen signs of rejection in some experimental animals, and we don't know what this would mean in functional terms in humans. Presumably, long-term immunosuppression would be necessary." He adds: "We don't know what fetal tissue would do over a period of many years. There's a possibility it could grow and become an invasive tumor."

"Why," asks Father Robert Barry, a bioethicist at the University of Illinois, "should these patients be put into a life-threatening condition in order to alleviate one that is only debilitating?"

"This is absolute science fiction," says William Landau. "There's no evidence that the brain can be transplanted functionally in an animal and it will work. The brain is a unique organ that doesn't regenerate new cells and this isn't going to be changed by anybody."

Nevertheless, many doctors remain convinced of the potential of fetal cells. Druck-Colin says, "There is no question that the patients get better. The real question is: For how long will they get better?" Freed says the improvements shown by his first successful patient, recounted in the May 1990 *Archives of Neurology*, went far beyond those expected from the surgical cuts. Freed has now operated on seven patients, claiming some success with four of them. He rejects Landau's hypothesis that it isn't the fetal cells but some other aspect of the operation that causes a lessening of the symptoms. "In animals, particularly the rat," he says, "it's well worked out. The dopamine cells actually grow . . . kind of like seeds and roots. These supply the adult brain with connections. It's actually a replacement cell for dead adult brain cells.

"People are trying to explain minor degrees of improvement in adrenal autografts. With fetal cell transplants we've found the less injury the better, so we think that doesn't account for effectiveness of fetal cell transplants."

Alternatives

Transplant opponents argue that there is no reason to portray providing therapy for Parkinson's disease patients or patients of other diseases as an either-or situation: either fetal cell transplants will help them or nothing will. Indeed, they say, all this fuss is a distraction from therapies that may prove cheaper, less painful, and more permanent, with the bonus that they completely bypass the touchy ethical issues. There are many alternative thera-

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pies either just around the corner or already being tried out.

It is difficult to predict developments for Parkinson's and other brain disorders because pharmaceutical and biotechnical companies guard their research very closely, and because the hype that has pervaded the fetal cell transplant area is common to all research science. But one drug recently put into use, Deprenyl, substantially slows the rate of neurodegeneration in Parkinsonian patients, according to a *Science* article by neurologists James Tetrud and William Langston. Deprenyl inhibits monoamine oxidase, a substance present in many different body cells and one that breaks down dopamine. "The magnitude of the effect is much greater than we could have hoped for," says Langston. "I suspect that very soon Deprenyl will find a place in the early treatment of Parkinson's disease." Again, Landau is skeptical.

Nerve growth factor (NGF) is a promising chemical for Alzheimer's. NGF is a key protein in the development and repair of the peripheral and central nervous systems. Injected into the brains of aged rats with a lower than normal ability to learn to swim a water maze, NGF improved their learning behavior and partly reversed the atrophy of the cholinergic (acetylcholine-secreting) neurons seen in the aged animals. According to one researcher, Dr. Fred Gage of the University of California, San Diego, "People are not saying that it's a cure, or that it treats the cause, but it may treat one of the symptoms." No one expects the growth factor to restore connections that are already lost—the goal is to stave off further deterioration.

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Yet Anders Bjorklund of the University of Lund, in Sweden, reported in the British journal *Nature* that he had actually reversed memory deficiency in rats, which he says is similar to Alzheimer's in humans, by injecting them with something different—*epidermal* growth factor. While the application is only by analogy, other scientists consider Bjorkland's experiment a step toward correcting the chemical upsets that may underlie chemical loss and toward treatments that have nothing to do with transplants. "The potential," says Don Marshall Gash, professor of neurobiology and anatomy at the University of Rochester, "is that ultimately we might need only to transfer chemicals, not entire cells, an obviously simpler procedure."

For decades, scientists have sought drugs that could penetrate the blood-brain barrier, and are beginning to make great strides. Researchers in Alabama have developed a substance that would allow dopamine to be conveyed with great precision to specific parts of the brain. Some of the more advanced work has been done by Nicholas S. Bodor, vice president for research at Pharmatec and a research professor at the University of Florida. Taking advantage of the capillary walls' affinity for fatty molecules, Bodor's technique combines a common fat-soluble carrier molecule with a drug molecule that it carries across the blood-brain barrier. Once there, the drug molecule is trapped, while the carrier molecule is expelled through the blood-brain barrier back into the capillaries.

"I suspect," says Richard Jed Wyatt, a transplant pioneer from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), "that we will gradually identify a slew of previously unknown substances in the brain as important to maintaining health as insulin is in diabetes."

In the March 27 issue of *Science*, two scientists reported their discovery that mouse brain tissue, when stimulated by NGF in a laboratory dish, has the capacity to produce new nerve cells. This discovery challenges the traditional view that the brain cells of post-natal mammals cannot regenerate. The scientists have yet to try to reproduce these results in living mice, but—considering that the cells in question are from the same part of the brain affected by Parkinson's, Huntington's, and other diseases; that a transplant would come from the person himself, thus negating the possibility of rejection; and that the cells would be adult ones—the ramifications would be tremendous.

This report was followed by one in the May 8 issue of *Science*, describing an almost complete reversal of Parkinsonism symptoms that had been induced in monkeys. The monkeys were injected with a substance derived from cow brains. Whether it will work in humans with actual Parkinson's disease remains to be seen, but the substance has already been used on humans with spinal cord injuries, with significant improvement shown.

However effective fetal cell transplantation turns out to be, it could well be surpassed by other technology before it comes to fruition, rather like the astronaut in the "Twilight Zone" television series who returns from a forty-year round-trip visit to a distant planet only to find that he has wasted half his life because faster ships have been developed since he left and have beaten him back to earth. At worst, fetal cell transplants may be the equivalent of the Jarvik-7—little more than an instrument of torture for the brave souls who assume guinea pig status for it. Given the lack of good animal data, the scarcity of medical research funds in general, and not least of all the repugnancy that much of society has toward using human tissue that was not consensually given, Congress would be advised to turn its attention to matters more pressing than lifting the ban on fetal tissue research. ❐

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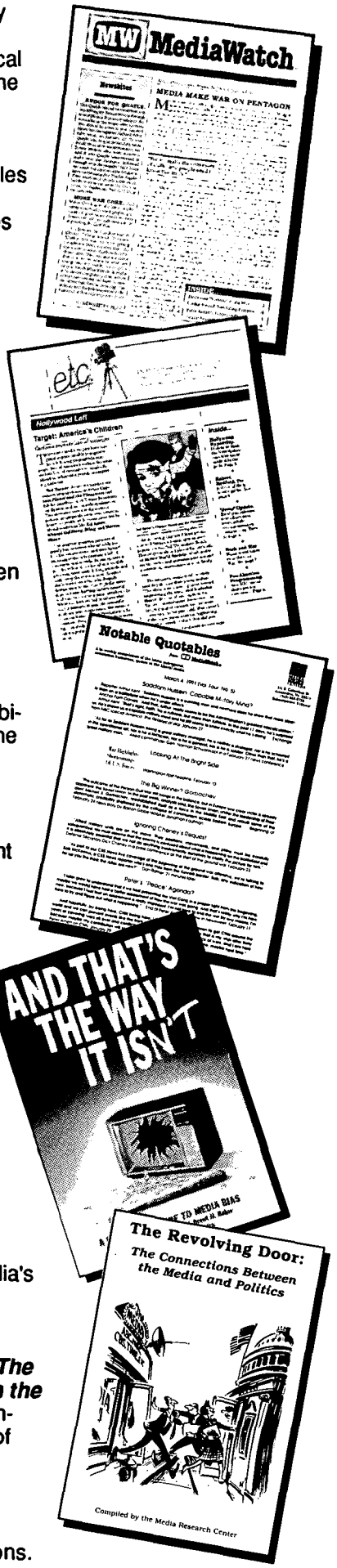

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Why Spy?

by Avigdor Haselkorn

Toward the end of his reign in the Kremlin, Mikhail Gorbachev presented the West with this dilemma: Should it actively push for Soviet reform, or adopt a hands-off approach in order to avoid an anti-Western backlash? Gorbachev's democratic reforms were hesitant, his plans for a market economy moribund, his efforts to reshape the military into a defensive force tentative. For example, in early 1991, Maj. Gen. Gelyi Batenin, an expert on strategic weapons and an adviser to the CPSU, complained in an article in *New Times* that the changes announced by Gorbachev four years earlier "have not affected the organizational pattern of the Soviet Armed Forces, which have for forty years been intended for an offensive war bringing a prompt victory. . . . The theory and practice of military science were subordinate to this principle."

In order not to weaken him, the West foolishly treated Gorbachev with kid gloves. His enemies were able to exploit the reform paralysis to gather strength, and eventually tried to oust him. For a few days it seemed the Cold War would be reignited.

There are signs that the West may repeat its mistake with Boris Yeltsin. Specifically, how should we handle continuing Russian espionage against the West? Is Yeltsin too weak to control the KGB's successors? Or is he deceiving the West? For despite assurances last March by Yuri Kobaladze, head of the Russian external intelligence service press bureau, that his agency is reducing its staff "both in the center and abroad throughout the world" to "a level of reasonable sufficiency," evidence of an emboldened and re-energized Russian espionage network is plentiful:

•**Germany**: In November 1991, Peter Frisch, vice president of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), told ADN, the former East German news agency, that the "phase of stagnation" in Soviet espionage against Germany, visible in the immediate aftermath of the collapse of Communism, was ending. The Russians, he added, have registered a marked increase in "source recruitment" at trade fairs and scientific exchanges. In fact, even "months before the change in the GDR" the KGB switched to an "operational area covering the whole of Germany" and activated their "emergency agents" to compensate for lost GDR contacts.

The dissolution of the KGB after the failed coup last August had little impact on these activities. *Der Spiegel* reported in February that the BfV office in Cologne has discovered nineteen Morse radio lines still being used to control German-speaking agents. Although the KGB's headquarters in East Berlin have been dismantled, the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS), the KGB's successor, has merely redeployed intelligence operatives to other posts across Germany. In particular, there has been "no noticeable change" in the collection activities originating at headquarters of the Western Group of the CIS Joint Armed Forces in Wuensdorf outside Berlin, work that is controlled by the GRU (military intelligence).

In March, the same magazine reported that "a large number" of former members of the Intelligence Collection Main Administration (HVA), East Germany's foreign intelligence agency, have been recruited by the FIS. German officials estimate that this office ran between five and six thousand agents in West Germany. Only 1,700 have been exposed so far, and it is thought that as many as 350 Stasi agents are now working for Moscow directly.

While taking over former HVA agents is not without risks—such transfers could be known to other former GDR agents, who might see such information as a potential bargaining chip when they come in from the cold—Moscow may have no choice given its longtime depen-

Avigdor Haselkorn is a strategic analyst and defense consultant specializing in CIS and Middle Eastern affairs.

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dence on East German spies in the former Federal Republic. Some German officials now believe that HVA, under its former chief Markus Wolf, supplied up to 80 percent of its findings to the Soviets, sometimes without the knowledge of Stasi boss Erich Mielke himself.

•Belgium/France/Netherlands: On April 11, the Belgian foreign ministry announced the expulsion of two officials from the Russian embassy in Brussels and two officials from its trade mission for "involvement in a network of secret agents of the former KGB." Five Belgian nationals, including three industrialists, a journalist, and a civil servant, have been arrested. According to the Belgian justice ministry, the network was set up around 1967 and "remained active after the disintegration of the Soviet Union." On April 11, Brussels radio reported that the ring supplied Moscow with high-tech military data, particularly in aeronautics.

According to the Brussels daily *Le Soir*, the ring was exposed after Vladimir Konopolev, first secretary at the Russian embassy, defected to the West this April. But *Le Figaro* says, more reliably, that the defection came in 1991, after which Konopolev acted as a double agent for a few months. Surprisingly, the FIS admitted that the four expelled diplomats were its agents and even disclosed Konopolev's rank (lieutenant colonel). But instead of issuing an apology, FIS press secretary Tatyana Samolis was quoted in Moscow's *Independent Gazette* of April 16 as complaining that Konopolev "has inflicted considerable damage on the Russian intelligence network in the West" and that he was motivated by "exclusively mercenary considerations." In an apparent reference to the case of Igor Cherpinsky, a KGB officer stationed in Brussels whose defection in 1990 led to the uncovering of another KGB spy ring in Belgium, *Izvestia* on April 14 lamented that "once again, as in the 'cold war' years, a defector has dealt a blow to our state interests," and went on to ask whether it was not time to "shake up our intelligence cadres abroad."

This was not the end of the story. According to *Le Figaro* of April 23, Konopolev's revelations allowed the French counterintelligence service DST to dismantle a Paris-based network of Russian agents. Several people were arrested, at least one of whom, an electronics engineer, was charged with spying for Russia. Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes revealed to the *New York Times* in May that a highly sensitive battlefield communications system—developed by the French electronics giant Thomson under the code name RITA and used by the U.S., French, and Belgian armies—"was apparently stolen by the spy ring."

Meanwhile, the Netherlands said it had ordered four Russians out of the country for spying, in cases unrelated to those in France and Belgium.

•Sweden: In an interview in the March 2 *Svenska Dagbladet*, Security Police chief Mats Borjesson confirmed that Russia has begun reducing the number of its intelligence officers in Sweden. He added, however, that "only a few have gone home as yet." As for the GRU, it "is continuing its activities in Sweden as before. No reductions have been noted here. As far as can be judged, the GRU is unaffected by all the changes that have taken place in Moscow."

While the Swedish official indicated that "there has been a certain decline in activity since the beginning of the year," he cautioned that it was "too early to say whether this is a reflection of a change in policy or simply a coincidence." At the same time, he warned, "we have noted that there is still significant activity by the organization that has replaced the old KGB." Accordingly, agents from both the GRU and FIS continue to attempt to recruit informants in Sweden "on a significant scale."

Meanwhile, on March 25 Stockholm Radio reported that, according to Swedish military authorities, Russian spy ships continue to patrol the southern Swedish coastline, monitoring Swedish military activity as well as NATO exercises in Baltic waters.

•Israel: Shin Bet, the Israeli security service, is so concerned about the presence of spies among the thousands of Jews arriving from the former Soviet Union that it took the unusual step of running an ad in the Russian-language daily *Nasha Strana* in April, urging Soviet immigrants to call a special hotline with information on newcomers who might be suspect. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, Israeli au-

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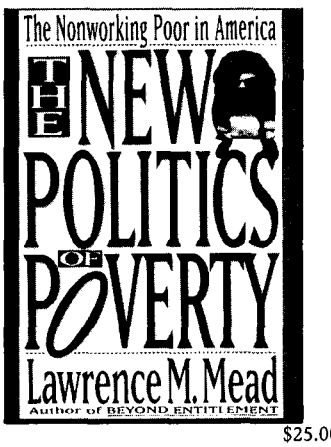

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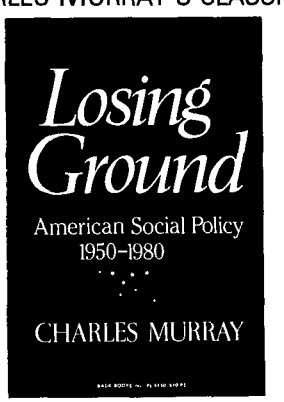

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thorities are convinced that some of the many qualified scientists and engineers who have been absorbed into sensitive high-tech projects are providing information to their Russian spymasters.

Indeed, there are at least three reasons why Israel remains high on the Russian intelligence list. (1) Operating in Israel is relatively cheap, given that many immigrants still have family in the ex-Soviet Union and are thus easy targets for blackmail. (2) Israeli military and high-tech industries are tightly linked to the U.S., where spying poses a greater political risk. (3) The sheer size of the new immigration—370,000 and counting—makes monitoring well-nigh impossible.

• **United States:** In several statements, FBI and CIA officials indicated that Russian intelligence efforts in the U.S. are increasing. In March, for example, FBI director William Sessions charged that Russian agents have intensified their efforts to recruit in U.S. government circles. Wayne Gilbert, the FBI assistant director for counterintelligence, subsequently said the GRU had stepped up efforts to obtain U.S. arms production technology. He specifically mentioned stealth technology, communications equipment, and computer software. He noted that GRU operatives are increasingly masquerading as tourists or businessmen, which makes them harder to detect than the journalists and diplomats of yesteryear.

Despite all such evidence, a decidedly more relaxed attitude toward Russian espionage has emerged in the West, no doubt because of the diminution of the Soviet military threat. Most friendly countries spy on each other without much ado, the argument goes, and Russia, after the collapse of Soviet Communism, should be treated similarly. At least this is how the FIS wants the West to react. Referring to the Belgian spying scandal, the *Independent Gazette* quoted an indignant Kobaladze as saying: "When Russia was Communist, then it was possible to understand the malicious rejoicing of our opponents. But now—are we partners or not? Why throw out only our associates?" Some even argue that Russian spying is in the West's best interests, on the assumption that anything that helps the Russian economy will solidify Yeltsin's democratic rule.

Unfortunately, there is a good chance that the Russian intelligence offensive is proceeding without Yeltsin's approval. Its endurance and scale could be taken as an indication of his weakness. Worse yet, the timing of the spying spree may be aimed at undermining him politically, by snarling his relations with the West.

The current campaign has all the markings of Yevgeni Primakov, now director of the FIS. Last October, soon after he was nominated to head the KGB's First Main Directorate (in charge of foreign intelligence), Primakov told Russian television that "the work with the agent network [abroad] will probably continue." He is an old hand in the anti-Western struggle. In 1980, he authored the definitive ideological justification for the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In 1990, he served as Gorbachev's personal emissary to Saddam Hussein. Ostensibly he was to bring about Saddam's peaceful withdrawal from Kuwait, but in fact lobbied hard to postpone any U.S. military attack against a longtime Moscow client. If war could not be prevented, Primakov's aim was to provide Saddam maximum time to prepare his defenses so that the U.S. would pay a heavy price for attacking him. The last thing the Soviets wanted was a demonstration of American superiority. As Primakov told Moscow television in October 1990 after a mission to the region, "The Soviet flag has been shown, and it is perceived positively. We are a superpower and we have our own line, our own policies." Incredibly, after the Gulf War, Primakov traveled to New York specifically to receive an award at the Waldorf-Astoria for his work on behalf of U.S.-Soviet relations.

The argument that Russia's spying is less harmful these days, because it is aimed at economic rather than military secrets, ignores the GRU's active part in the current offensive. In an interview with *Krasnaya Zvezda* last April, Col. Gen. Yevgeni Timokhin, chief of the GRU and deputy chief of the General Staff of the CIS Joint Armed Forces, said, "Our military intelligence service forms a constituent part of the Armed Forces, and is one of the means of supporting their combat activity." He went on to acknowledge Western demands to curtail the "activities of our military intelligence abroad," but said, "I must emphasize that such ultimatums are futile."

General Timokhin can be believed. There is an inverse relationship between cuts in military capabilities and the need for timely information. The greater the reduction in the quantity of forces, the more central the quality of military technology becomes, and the greater the incentive to steal it—especially in Russia today, where there is little money to spend on R&D. In fact, Timokhin has argued that cutting the budget of the GRU could in the final analysis cost the country more, since the development of advanced weapons autonomously is often more expensive.

If we accept the Russian line that *all* its intelligence efforts in the West are "normal commercial espionage," it shouldn't be surprising that most GRU operations are aimed at increasing the competitiveness of Russia's weapons for export. Curtailing Russia's "commercial" espionage is thus consistent with promoting international stability.

Moreover, successful economic intelligence can cause as much damage as military espionage. In 1988, for example, Herbert Hellenbroich, then president of BfV, estimated that Soviet economic spying was costing West Germany upwards of DM 8 billion a year. No wonder that Lt. Gen. Leonid Shebarshin told *Pravda* on April 22, 1990, that "on the whole intelligence is highly profitable work." Finally, in a country where almost all military weaponry is for sale and where former KGB staffers are deeply involved in black market operations, there is every reason to expect that secrets stolen from the West will similarly be offered to the highest bidder. Radical Muslim regimes like Libya and Iran are ready to pay cash. Saudi Arabia, with which Russia and the Central Asian republics hope to develop close economic ties, may be offered "intelligence cooperation" as part of any deal. In fact, *Pravda* reported last October 31 that the Armenian KGB was planning to offer sophisticated communications equipment to private buyers. The proceeds would go to strengthen the KGB's "technical services" and "help resolve some of the problems in providing social and consumer amenities for personnel."

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Most disturbing, of course, is that Russia's foreign intelligence effort is in full gear at a time when Moscow is appealing for massive financial and economic aid. In the words of Belgium's foreign minister Willy Claes: "It is at the very moment we are trying to convince our people to do things for Russia that we discover there is money somewhere to finance spying activities, activities we thought belonged to the past." In these circumstances, economic relief could allow Russia to divert resources from the civilian economy to espionage. The West, in other words, would be financing Russian espionage against itself.

The contradiction between actively seeking Western help while simultaneously intensifying espionage raises the possibility that it is all a gambit of the "old guard" to undermine Russia's relations with the West and bring down the Yeltsin government. After all, relations between Yeltsin and the KGB were tense (in 1990 the KGB was implicated in at least two plots to eliminate him), and most of the FIS still consists of former KGB personnel. Under these circumstances, it may be argued, delaying aid as punishment for spying will only play into the hands of the enemies of Russian democracy. Even if there is only circumstantial evidence to support this theory, it cannot be entirely overlooked.

There are, then, three scenarios: (1) Yeltsin is in full control of the current espionage campaign and must be made to halt it. (2) The Russian intelligence apparatus is acting independently, a possibility raised by CIA director Robert Gates (and rejected out of hand by Kobaladze). (3) The campaign is a deliberate provocation against the Yeltsin government.

The last two theories imply weakness on Yeltsin's part. Naturally, as with Gorbachev previously, there is a tendency among Western governments to play down the problem in order to protect him. As before, this is the wrong approach. By not pressing Yeltsin to take a stand against his FIS-GRU nemeses—by delaying aid if necessary—the West will be condoning a grave challenge to better relations. Already there are predictions, for instance in *Le Figaro*, that the probable expulsion of Russian diplomats posted to France "could in fact lead to an open crisis between Paris and Moscow." If Yeltsin is not in full control, an approach like Germany's, reported by *Die Welt* in April, offering him an intelligence cooperation agreement in return for curtailed spying, has little chance of being implemented once signed.

Deliberate provocation or not, business as usual will only further embolden the sundry "dark forces" (in Mr. Nixon's words) waiting to destroy Yeltsin. For the West to look the other way is to recognize the power of Yeltsin's opposition and acknowledge that a confrontation could lead to his toppling. Yeltsin will appreciate a tougher Western position. He blamed the August 1991 coup on Gorbachev's having surrounded himself with reactionaries. It would now be a tragic irony if he himself were to provide them with the sanctuary from which to continue their unholy work. ❐

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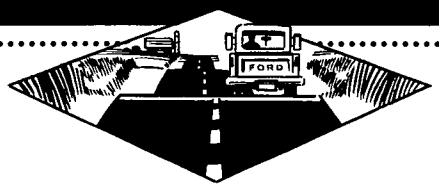

A Hero of the Cold War

by Arch Puddington

Tom Kahn began his political life in the 1950s as a member of the youth wing of a small radical group whose ancestry can be traced to Leon Trotsky. He ended up a hero of the Cold War, one of the last of the liberal anti-Communists, a man who, in helping to sustain Poland's Solidarity movement during the mean years of martial law, played a direct part in pushing the Evil Empire over the edge. Tom fought Communism the way he fought left-wing factional wars—to win. He loathed defeatists and regarded with contempt the governing and business elites who preferred the stability of Soviet rule to the messiness of freedom.

A few months after Solidarity's birth in 1980, Tom commented that, while it was one thing to tell America's young "that the road to peace and freedom is arduous and long, it is quite another to suggest that it stretches on to nowhere." He knew whereof he spoke. As chief foreign policy assistant to AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, Tom was privy to the foreign policy establishment's craven discomfort at the coming Polish turbulence. For no sooner did Kirkland announce the formation of a Polish workers' assistance fund than Secretary of State Muskie rushed in to assure First Secretary Brezhnev that the Carter Administration would have nothing to do with it. In their private conversations, Tom reported, government officials expressed alarm over this newest threat to East Bloc stability, and distress over the labor movement's provocative response.

For Tom, the Polish developments were the central event of our time. Early on, he'd learned that revolutionary periods are few and fleeting, that opportunities must not be squandered, that chances have to be taken. The Hungarian Revolution had been a defining moment in his political upbringing, and he later witnessed the shameful betrayal of the Prague Spring. Yet he was convinced that Poland would be different. Here all the elements were in place: a revolutionary democratic movement rooted in the working class; an exhausted and discredited Communist leadership without the resources to buy off the proletariat; and an imperial colossus weighted down by war, a restive empire, and internal stagnation. He was, in fact, among the very few to have foreseen Communism's demise. It's right there, in black and white, in a 1980 speech he delivered to Social Democrats, USA, predicting, not without some prudent hedging, that the destruction of Communism was in reach if only the democratic world approached the challenge with firmness. It never ceased to amaze Tom that American officials, ostensibly appointed to prosecute a foreign policy rooted in anti-Communism, would mount vigorous arguments against exploiting the contradictions of the Soviet system.

In carrying out the labor movement's Polish project, Tom thus found himself at war with Western elites almost as much as with the Communists. Détente was still a sacred cow to many European trade unionists and social democrats, and it fell to the AFL-CIO to minimize the damage done by the Brandts, Palmes, and Kreiskys. Even the Reagan Administration harbored a strong impulse to bow to the prevailing wisdom that Solidarity was a spent force and that there was no alternative but to accommodate General Jaruzelski. That sanctions against the Polish Communist regime were maintained to the very end is in no small way due to labor's—and Tom's—tenacity.

Tom Kahn received his political education as a member of the Independent Socialist League, an organization led by the legendary Max Shachtman, who had made the journey from Communism to Trotskyism to a militant and altogether unique brand of left anti-Communism. A man of the old school, Shachtman was given to four-hour speeches on subjects like the betrayal of the revolution or the immorality of the peace movement. Although the ISL was small and relatively obscure, Shachtman, by dint of intellectual charisma, attracted a cadre of brilliant young followers—many of whom went on to distinguished careers in the arts, the universities, and the trade union movement—at a time when most of the American left was in a condition of advanced ossification.

Arch Puddington worked for nine years as executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy, where Tom Kahn served as chairman.

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A photograph of Tom from those early days reveals an emaciated young man with a vaguely hostile expression. All young leftists, of course, carry their share of hostility, and those like Tom who also devoted themselves to the civil rights movement had a ready-made excuse for their anti-bourgeois resentments. All the same, Tom and the other youthful Shachtmanites steered clear of the hard-edged anti-Americanism that made the New Left so unsavory. They were among the civil rights movement's most courageous troops. Tom, in the phrase of the day, often put his body on the line, and was roughed up more than once. His commitment was perhaps best exemplified by his decision to spend his last two years of college at Howard University, a logical, if unorthodox, step for someone who planned to devote his life to working for racial equality.

Tom was an especially gifted writer, all the more reason to lament that his reputation never spread outside left-liberal circles. With his relentless logic, knife-blade prose, and virtuoso polemical talents, he could easily have matured into one of his generation's important political analysts. During his association with civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, Tom helped prepare a series of controversial essays on the future of the movement, and authored several stinging attacks on the New Left at a time when student radicals were being hailed as living saints. Unfortunately, Tom suffered from an acute case of perfectionism that turned writing into a torment. For days he would agonize over the perfect idea, the perfect formulation, the perfect insult. Eventually, essays ceased to appear under his byline, although he continued to churn out glittering speeches for presidential candidates Hubert Humphrey and Henry Jackson, and for George Meany and other trade union figures.

Alas, even Tom's beautifully crafted phrases couldn't convince Democrats to make Scoop Jackson their presidential nominee. As one of the architects of Democratic party realignment, Tom ruefully came to admit that he perhaps bore some responsibility for the transformation of the party from Cold War liberalism to McGovernite isolationism. According to its proponents, realignment would bring to power an alliance of trade unionists, blacks, and lib-

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erals—an expanded and strengthened civil rights coalition—and overthrow the Dixiecrats and urban machines that seemed to exert so powerful and baleful an influence on American politics. In the event, the Daleys and Eastlands were shoved aside and replaced not by labor-oriented cold warriors and black integrationists, but by Bella Abzug, Tom Hayden, and Jesse Jackson. Replaced, in other words, by the pro-Communists, New Leftists, and black nationalists who brought to ruin just about every cause Tom cared about.

Tom hated what the left became because he genuinely liked America—the real America, with its electronic gadgets and open highways, not the unattainable ideal sketched out by critics who insisted that they would love America only when it "lived up to its democratic promise." His years of political activism allowed him immediately to dismiss those earnest demands for "participatory democracy" as nothing more than the power move of an educated elite bent on class supremacy. These people were the enemies of the working class, a class Tom held in great respect for its honesty and modesty and saw as the source of American strength. In recent years, Tom privately was realistic about the decline of blue-collar America, but he was not happy about it, believing we were in for a less happy time in the post-industrial age.

Not that he suffered from the rampant post-Communist malaise. Although hardly a triumphalist, he enjoyed a bit of gloating over Communism's pathetic collapse, not to mention the humiliation of its apologists and fellow travelers at home. Whether or not they had Tom in mind, it was he whom the advocates of neutralism and "peace" were describing when they spoke of retrograde Cold Warriors, warmongers, and enemies of mutual understanding.

Tom died recently, of AIDS, at age 53. His memorial service drew a diverse group, including Lane Kirkland and Vladimir Bukovsky, Eleanor Holmes Norton and Richard Perle. At one time or another, Tom had been friends to them all, and a comrade-in-arms. Among his qualities was a talent for inspiring an audience with the nobility of a cause. There aren't many people left who can still do that. ❐

BEN STEIN'S DIARY

The Road to Surfdom

by Benjamin J. Stein

Tuesday

It's a beautiful day. The sun is dazzling. The sky is a perfect light blue. The waves are crashing on the beach below my house in Trancas, so it's time to go out to get some yoghurt. Or yogurt. Or something.

At Scallywag's Yogurt, in the Zuma Plaza, there is the usual knot of young people enjoying the parking lot by skateboarding on it. Skateboarding makes an absolutely horrible noise, but today I decided to shine it on.

Inside, I ordered a chocolate non-fat. "I'm so sorry," said the girl behind the counter, "but we're out of chocolate yogurt."

"All right," I said, "how about some vanilla yogurt?"

"We're out of vanilla, too," the girl said. "The owner forgot to order yogurt."

I settled for a small dish of ice cream, and as I ate, in walked Darah, a lovely 14-year-old child. "Bueller, Bueller," she said when she saw me.

"Tell me something, Darah," I said. "Do you know what year you were born?"

"Nineteen seventy-eight," she said proudly.

"Do you know who was President when you were born?" I asked.

She looked at me cagily.

"No," she answered.

"Yes, you have to," I said. "Let's try to figure it out."

"Okay."

"Now, who's President right now?"

"Bush," she answered.

"And who was before Bush?"

She thought for a long time, pursing her mouth, making faces, and finally said, "Reagan."

"Right," I said. "Now, who was President before Reagan?"

"Why?" Darah asked.

"Because," I said, "that's who was President when you were born."

"Okay," she said. She thought for a really long time, and then said, "Johnny Carson."

Friday

I drove over to my condo with Trixie in tow. As I stood in the lobby, studying my mail, such a pitiful lot as it was, an older man whom I knew stood at the lobby door holding his Rottweiler on a leash. He looked intently at me. I started to walk towards him, so that he might speak to me if he wished.

"What's your problem?" the man said, apropos of nothing that I could tell. "Are you just stupid, or what?"

"Don't call me stupid," I said. "What's the matter with you?"

"If you don't get out of my way right now," the man said, "my Rottweiler'll tear your throat out."

"What?" I asked. "Are you crazy?"

"I'll show you who's crazy," the man said. "My dog'll have you and your dog down before you know it. He'll have your throat out."

The dog was straining at his leash looking vicious and scary.

I went to my apartment. I called 911 and said a crazy person was threatening me with his attack dog. The sheriffs said they would be right over. (We have sheriffs in West Hollywood.)

In the meantime, I contemplated my options. I have a gun in my apartment,

Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, lawyer, economist, and actor living in Malibu, California.

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and I started to load it. Then I thought that if talk would do, so much the better. I called the lunatic on the house phone.

"Maybe you'd like to just apologize and say you had a bad day before the police get here," I said.

"I'm not going to apologize," he said angrily. "You happen to be a very rude and arrogant person. You wrote an article about the Shoreham Towers, and now you're the god of the building, and I've lived here for twenty-four years and nobody even knows who I am."

"So, that's what this is all about? You're upset because I wrote an article about this building?"

"Plus, you don't like my Rottweiler."

Okay, I thought. Okay. Fine.

I got in my car and drove over to the home of my fugitive wife. She was out of town. I decided I would stay the night.

On the way, I stopped at a shopping center to get money from a cash machine. A black homeless man offered to wash my car windows. The shopping center was deserted. The man started to tell a joke about going to jail. I can't recall how it went, but his delivery was pretty good.

"You should be on Johnny Carson," I said, offering him a dollar.

"I think so, too," he said. "Do you know him?"

"Not really," I answered. "Sorry. Good night."

"Ain't nothing good about being homeless," he said.

At Tommy's house, which I bought as a bachelor sixteen years ago, Elena—Alex's live-in housekeeper, who makes breakfast in bed for everyone but me—let me in warily. She was washing clothes at midnight. Why not? "Generally speaking," said Samuel Johnson, "work is the surest and safest cure for any unsound mental condition." I may have that a little off, but you get the point, right?

I fell asleep. At one in the morning, there was a furious barking from the dogs. Furious. Scary. I went to the front door. There, huddled against the night air, was a pitiful-looking woman. She wore a thin T-shirt and satin shorts, and had her hair in a ponytail. She was smoking a cigarette and crying at the same time.

Amazingly, this has happened twice before.

"A man tried to rape me," she said. "He picked me up at Hollywood and Western and brought me up here to, you know. I do it, and then he wouldn't pay me, and he told me he'd kill me, and I jumped out of the car and ran to your house. God, it's deserted up here."

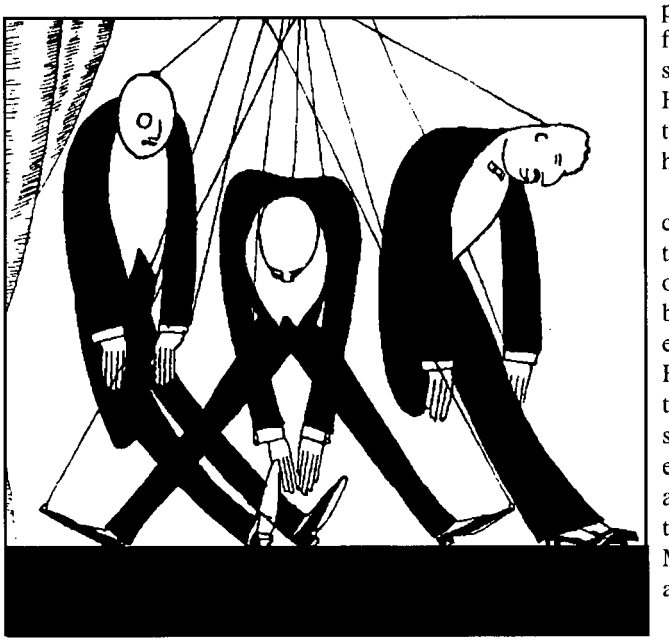
After about nine at night, Mulholland and Outpost, where Alex lives, might as well be on the moon. No buses, no stores, no traffic. Very far from Hollywood and Western.

"Would you like for me to call the police?" I asked.

"I guess so," she said.

I went to call 911 again. The dispatcher said a police car would be right over.

"The only thing is," said the woman, still outside, "that I was sort of, well, working when he picked me up."



"By 'working,' do you mean 'hooking'?"

"Right," she said.

Still, as I told her, she was not allowed to be raped, as far as the law said.

She sat on my stoop and I stood with her. She was shivering. I resisted the temptation to give her one of the two mink coats that I bought Alex long ago and which she now will not wear. Instead, I gave her an ancient pink Brooks Brothers shirt from my days at the Alpha Delta Phi house at Columbia.

"I was just trying to make my rent," she said. "Just trying to make my way in the world with the economy as bad as it is."

In the street light, she looked amazingly like Joan Didion. She was 28, she said. She was from Ohio, down on her luck.

The police came. Two officers, a gringo and a Hispanic, led the woman into their cruiser with genuine tenderness. It was as if she were one of their sisters. One actually took her left hand and escorted her as if she were his date. The kindness of strangers.

Wednesday

Off to pick up my son at his preschool. He was upset because he'd lost his precious rope. It's twenty-five feet long, and he uses it to tie up his Nana (a.k.a. Elena, the ancient Mexican housekeeper) and his Mommy, pretending that he's holding them for ransom. He brought it to preschool to show his colleagues. He cried because he had lost it. A teacher and I found it on top of his cubby. Tough life, kid.

Then, off to buy him a chocolate-chip cookie. The pretty waitresses oohed and ahhed over him. Why not? He's light blond, pale, with long blond eyelashes, and deep-blue eyes. He has perfect little Aryan features and a ready, confident smile. As far as he's concerned, everyone will always love him and Daddy will always be there to buy him treats. And Nana and Mommy will always be available to be tied up.

As we headed back to the car, two LAPD black-and-whites cruised by. There were two men in one and one man in another. Through the loudspeaker in his car, the solo driver sang, in a good voice, "And more, much more than this, I did it my way." Then he smiled broadly and gave a thumbs-up to the other two, who also smiled and gave a thumbs-up.

Hmmm, I thought. A verdict in the Rodney King case out in faraway Thousand Oaks. A Not Guilty verdict was my guess. I saw it coming a mile away. In Thousand Oaks, which police and firemen of the white persuasion like to call home?

While I rested at Tommy's house,

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which I still own, there was a report on the television on the Rodney King case. Not guilty, except for a hung jury on one count. Hmmm.

Mommy came home and went swimming with Tommy. Then she got out and entered things in her computer while she looked out at the pool and shouted occasional encouragement at Tommy. Oh, what a scene. Mommy on her computer in her home office overlooking the pool. Daddy looking on from the deck. Tommy splashing like young Hyperion in his pool.

Into my car with Trixie for the long haul back to the beach. I turned on the radio, and heard about rioting in South Central Los Angeles. Somewhere south of the Harbor and Santa Monica Freeways, gangs of blacks were dragging white and Asian people from cars and beating them. The LAPD had retreated, leaving the streets to the hoodlums. Media helicopters were circling overhead describing what was happening. A man clubbed to the ground. Blacks kicking him in the head. Going through his pockets. Stealing his wallet. No police anywhere.

Then reports of fires. Big huge fires. Warehouses. Bad, bad fires. Liquor stores were being looted.

On the Ventura Freeway, the pace of the cars picked up by visible degrees. Everyone in the cars was straining forward. GET US OUT OF HERE AND BACK TO THOUSAND OAKS.

Mayor Bradley came on the radio and said his usual idiocies: blame the jury system; blame the cops; never, ever blame the people setting the fires.

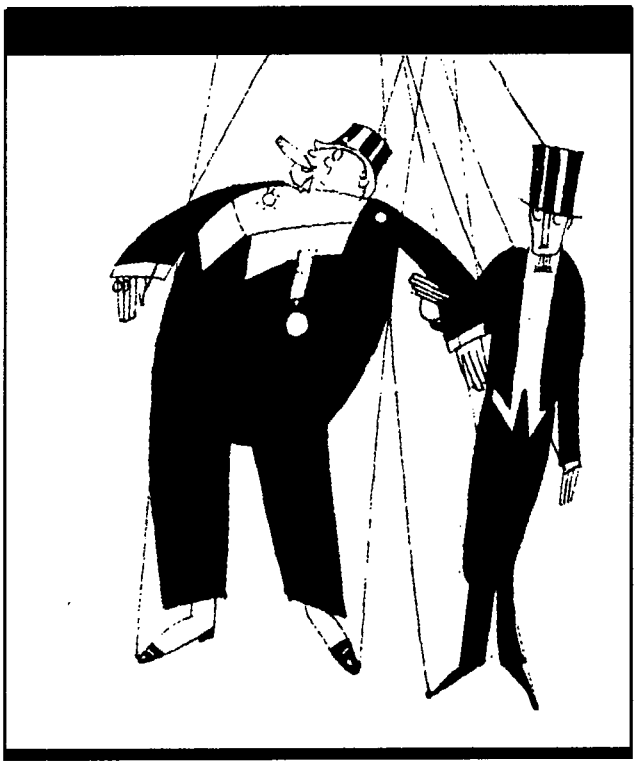
I turned down Malibu Canyon Road. It's an authentic country road, once you get past the shopping center and the loathsome condos. There are meadows and oak trees and glowing cliffs. On the radio, there was talk of sixty out-of-control fires.

A man in a helicopter said there was no excuse for looting and beating unarmed motorists. Mayor Bradley said there was an excuse and started to blame it all on the police again.

I met a woman business owner on Pacific Coast Highway in front of Zooma (sic) Sushi. We went in past the Pepperdine students and sat down to eat. On the TV above the sushi bar there were endless, nonstop portraits of new fires. Warehouse roofs. Liquor store fronts. Appliance stores fully engulfed. Furniture stores lit like torches. The most vivid were buildings with electrical transformers exploding. They gave out a gorgeous blue-white flash as they popped.

The main sushi chef said that he was glad the police were acquitted. A few hard drinkers applauded. Everyone else was scared, jazzed, peering, trying to be calm.

Next to our table, two couples were necking violently as they watched the TV. The last days of Pompeii.



At home, with Trixie next to me on the bed, I watched the looting and the fires. Gangs torching palm trees, newsstands, grocery stores, anything that would burn. The police behaving with insane restraint. What has happened to them? What has Chief Gates told them?

At 4:00 a.m., I was awakened by the smell of acrid smoke coming through my bedroom window. I thought it must be a brush fire nearby. It wasn't. Off to the southeast, the sky over Los Angeles, fifty miles away, was flickering with flames, and columns of smoke rose against the stars.

Thursday

Stunning news all morning about fires, fires, and more fires. Mayor Bradley still supinely, pathetically insisting that things are almost under control. On TV, it looks as if every building in South Central Los Angeles is on fire.

Lunch with a few friends from Journey into Self-Obsession, my self-help group. One woman said she knew from the riots that in her past life she must have been a rebel with Spartacus.

Another young woman, a well-to-do 15-year-old who has been waging a war against her weight for about a lifetime while receiving roughly $2,000 in psychiatric care per week, said that the riots made her feel bad about *herself.* "They like jam me up inside and make me feel fat. I feel like I'm not pretty and my face is broken out and I hate all my clothes, just because of these people in South Central Los Angeles."

On the radio, a helicopter pilot says that Martin Luther King would be turning over in his grave if he could see what was happening on Martin Luther King Boulevard. The station then replays the most irrelevant statement of all time by George Bush. Meaningless platitudes when what we need is the 82nd Airborne.

On TV, scary-looking blacks and Hispanics interrupt their looting to throw punches at newsmen. I wonder if any of them ever walked into a pastry shop the way Tommy does and knew that everyone there would love him. I wonder if any of them had fathers who bought cookies for them and then met Mommy for swimming.

Come to think of it, no one did that for my father. Or for me. Come to think of it, these guys are criminals, and nobody's enforcing the law. I think that's the bottom line here.

I called Mommy and insisted that she and Young Mr. Wonderful come out and stay with me. I had in mind something like the *Decameron*. We genteel folks would all sit out here and tell stories while the plague raged in the city.

"No way," Alex said. "I have to get ready for Tommy's swim party. A whole

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bunch of his pals are coming over to swim with him, and the mothers are all going to walk over to Mulholland and watch the fires."

My pal Jane came over. We decided that we should go to dinner at the Point Hueneme Naval Air Station. It would surely be safe there, another twenty miles past Trancas, even if all of Los Angeles exploded.

In the enlisted men's club, called The Point or something just as cute, we watched the biggest-screen TV I have ever seen, with several enlisted men and their wholesome, rural Pennsylvania–type families.

Pat Lalama, on KCBS, reported breathlessly from Long Beach that a gang of black men had just pulled two white men off their motorcycles, beaten them, and shot them both in the head. One was dead at the scene.

Back at the KCBS "anchor desk," an anchorwoman named Bree Walker scolded Pat Lalama. "I think the last thing we need at this point is to have someone bring up race as an issue," Bree Walker, a very confused woman, said.

Friday

Ah, but then there is Hollywood. Lunch at Malibu La Scala with T., who is the husband of F., a genuine legend in Hollywood. The wife is the bustling, teary, but always chin-up modern day Li'l Orphan Annie that audiences love. Hubby is head of a wildly successful production company. I figure that with the residuals, the acting wages, and his deal, the two of them are good for about six to eight million per annum.

"I can understand the fury of those rioters," T. said. "And I plan to do something about it. I'm going to invest ten thousand dollars each in a Korean store and then in a black store. I want to show those people that those of us who have a few dollars still care."

"That's very impressive," I said.

"Plus, I can understand where the fear of those guys in South Central, and the aircraft engineers who have been laid off, comes from. They totally are scared about losing their standard of living. The two cars, the boat in the driveway. I can get with it," he said, throwing in a little slug of street jive.

"Peace-out," I said, wagging my left index and middle fingers in a sort of secret V-for-victory sign that I saw on a hip TV show recently.

"The reason I can see and actually feel their fear is that F. and I have a good life, but it's fragile. I could change at any minute. Yes, we have a plantation in South Carolina and a big house in Pacific Palisades, but that could change. I almost bought a really big lot in Bel Air for twenty-two million and built a big house there. I'd be high and dry if I did."

"But you and F. must make more than five million a year, at least," I said, messing up my syntax in my excitement.

"But it's fragile," T. said. "Next year it could be three million, and I would be just where those laid-off engineers are."

Back in Malibu, a call from Alex. An old man from the synagogue, a man who had a folding box business in South Central Los Angeles for twenty years, had gone down there to tell his employees to go home and be

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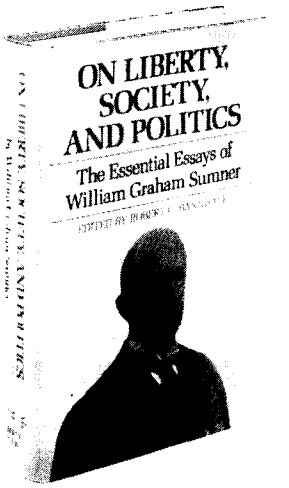

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safe. He had been dragged from his car and shot thirty times.

Jane went off to the Zuma Ranch Market, which is run by Koreans. The shopkeeper was crying, she said. A cousin in Koreatown, near downtown, had been shot. His sister had been shot in a robbery a year before.

A call from my pal, Steve. "Where should we move?" he asked. "Oregon? Utah? Canada? Where?"

A call from my pal A. "Where should we move?" he asked. "Arizona? France?"

A call from my pal D. "Where should we move? England? Denmark?"

This is an astounding state of affairs: We can count on government to help out Kuwait, but we can't count on government to maintain law in our nation. This is the way nations come to an end. But why do the law-abiding people have to be the ones to move? Why can't the gangsters move? Where's Gary Cooper?

Saturday

It's all over, now, baby blue. The President called out the National Guard and the Marines. The streets are calm again, even though buildings are still smoldering and snipers are still shooting. Come to think of it, maybe that's not really what should be called calm. In fact, just thinking that snipers might be out there in our own city sort of contradicts the whole idea of what a city or a nation is supposed to be.

Maybe this is how it will be from now on. Like a rebellion, ongoing all of the time.

Any old way, Tommy and I went to the hardware store this morning. I bought pruning shears to trim back some awesome, scary branches that were interfering with my walkway to my pathetic hedge. Tommy worked with his clippers and smaller branches. I got to a branch, under the hot sun, that was so thick that I couldn't cut it. I was struggling and struggling and Tommy, in his little blue and white suit with its shorts, came over and said, "I'll help you, Daddy."

He held the shears and squeezed them together as I did. His extra strength was exactly what I needed. The blades went slowly but surely through the wood, and the huge, two-inch thick branch fell onto the stone steps with a satisfying, solid thud. ❐

PRESSWATCH

Hill's Rats

by Terry Eastland

On May 5 the Senate released the 171-page report of Peter E. Fleming, Jr., the New York lawyer asked to find out who leaked Anita Hill's confidential allegations of sexual harassment against then–Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. Fleming was unable to identify the leaker(s), but this failure alone cannot account for the skimpy coverage his report received. To learn for certain what Fleming had learned, you would have needed your own copy, and Sen. George Mitchell's office professed to have run out of copies early on.

Given four months to do the job, Fleming interviewed more than a hundred people, including senators, Senate staffers, members of liberal interest groups, and Anita Hill herself. He found, among other things: that on September 23 Hill had telefaxed a statement of her charges to the Judiciary Committee; that on September 25 she faxed an identical statement, typographical errors having been corrected, to the committee; that on the same day she faxed a copy of what was apparently a draft of her Judiciary statement to Metzenbaum staffer James Brudney after he requested a written description of her charges; and that while the contents of the FBI report on the Hill charges were not leaked either in whole or in part, "hard copy" of Hill's Judiciary statement was leaked to National Public Radio's Nina Totenberg, one of the two reporters (Timothy Phelps of *Newsday* being the other) to break the sexual harassment story on October 6.

Fleming concluded that Hill herself had not leaked a copy of her statement to Totenberg. (Phelps, he found, did not have a hard copy but reported Hill's allegations on the basis of a "source" who had seen it.) Fleming established—a major point buried in news stories about his report—that "the document" in Totenberg's possession "originated from the Senate." Taking a page from the playbooks of Richard Nixon and Oliver North, Totenberg destroyed this document. Later, she refused to answer the counsel's questions. The Senate Rules Committee having denied Fleming's request that it compel her (and Phelps's) testimony, he was unable, as his report puts it, "to identify the Senate source of the document delivered to Totenberg." On the facts Fleming established, however, Brudney remains the main suspect. Hill faxed three and only three copies of her statement. The two that went to the Judiciary Committee were guarded like sacred writ. The one that went to Brudney is the only one that could have been copied and somehow "delivered" to Totenberg.

What Fleming also does not say, but one may reasonably infer from his report, is that someone in the Senate—and again Brudney, who denied leaking his copy of Hill's statement, is the main suspect—lied to him. More specifically, someone in the Senate lied to Congress, since Fleming represented Congress in this case. His report states: "Witnesses were not sworn, but were advised of our view that they were subject to the penal sanctions of 18 U.S.C. 1001." That law, a

Terry Eastland is a resident fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. In August the Free Press will publish his latest book, Energy in the Executive: The Case for the Strong Presidency.

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criminal statute, prohibits making false statements to the government. Whenever a member of the executive branch is accused of making false statements to Congress, journalists typically join with members of Congress in calling for a criminal investigation. Not only did the press make no such demand in this case, the coverage of the Fleming report failed even to mention the perjury that evidently occurred. You're allowed to lie to Congress if you are a member or a staffer.

Or, it seems possible, if you are Anita Hill. During the October hearing, Hill, under oath, was asked repeatedly by Senator Leahy whether she had given a copy of her statement to anyone other than the Judiciary Committee and, later, her lawyer. Hill said she had not. Leahy ran through third-party possibilities, including the press; each time Hill denied giving out her statement. Now we know, however, that she had also faxed a copy to Brudney. Curiously, Fleming does not point out this contradiction, but this leaves the obvious question: Was this just a memory lapse, or was Hill covering for Brudney? If you are able to gain admission to one of Anita Hill's $10,000 lectures, here is an area you will want to ask about before the police escort you off.

Do not, of course, expect the press to pursue Brudney or Hill. There can be little doubt that few reporters bothered to read the Fleming report. When the Senate considered and then decided to have a leak investigation, journalists pooh-poohed the whole idea, inanely arguing, as the *New York Times* put it, that the Senate runs on leaks. When the report was issued, the pundits who shape the journalistic fashions in Washington blasted away quite predictably: "a farce" (Clarence Page), "ridiculous" (Chris Matthews), and "stupid" (Totenberg). Only Glenn R. Simpson of *Roll Call* in the one lengthy analysis I found, and the *Washington Times* in editorials written by David Brock (author of the March *TAS* blockbuster, "The Real Anita Hill"), engaged in any thoughtful way the contents of the report. These writers understood the political significance of the report, which demonstrates without saying so that, as Simpson put it, "Senate staffers worked closely with interest groups not merely in an attempt to defeat Thomas but specifically in an effort to bring Hill's charges before the public."

Fleming's reconstruction of events begins in July with the Alliance for Justice doing "some research" into a rumor about an unnamed woman claiming to have been sexually harassed by Thomas. The origins of this rumor remain murky; Fleming says it came from "an unidentified friend of Hill's who had described her allegations at a dinner party" in Washington. The Alliance concluded the woman was Hill, and its director, Nan Aron, then "passed" the allegation to a Metzenbaum staffer, William Corr. On September 5, Gail Laster of Metzenbaum's staff talked by phone with Hill, evidently Hill's first contact with a staffer. By this point, other Metzenbaum and also now some Kennedy staffers, all working in concert with the groups, were on the case. Metzenbaum staffer Bonnie Goldstein, Fleming drily writes, "had taken an interest in allegations of personal misconduct which had been collected by groups opposing the Thomas nomination." From George Kassouf of the Alliance for Justice, she "received a full account of their information about Thomas." On September 9, Ricki Seidman, the Kennedy staffer brought over from People for the American Way, phoned Hill, who said she would talk about her charges against Thomas on a confidential basis. Seidman told her that she might be more comfortable talking to "a person she knew"—Brudney, who went to the Yale Law School when Hill did.

On September 10, Brudney called Hill. It was the first of at least thirteen phone conversations they would have between that date and September 23—when Hill faxed her statement to the committee. From the Fleming report, it appears that Brudney operated as a counselor of sorts to Hill, facilitating her contact with the Judiciary Committee and encouraging her to press her charges there. Hill "disagrees with Brudney's claim that he was entirely neutral," writes Fleming. She "recalls Brudney's stance as more persistent and says she told him on several occasions it was her decision to make." By September 18, Hill had acquired a legal adviser familiar with the law of sex discrimination. She was Susan Ross, a Georgetown law professor recommended to Hill by . . . Brudney. Hill, Ross, and Brudney talked with each other by phone over the next four days. Someone—Fleming does not say who, but how about Brudney?—suggested that Hill prepare a written statement. As to whether she should do so, Ross, "with Hill's authorization," consulted with Judith Lichtman of the Women's Legal Defense Fund.

Hill worked on her statement on September 21-22; on both days she spoke with Brudney by phone about her progress. On September 23 she faxed the statement to the Judiciary Committee, afterwards calling Brudney to tell him not only about this transmission but also about an interview two FBI agents conducted with her that same day. Two days later Brudney called Hill; he told her he was preparing a memo for Metzenbaum on sexual harassment and wanted to include a description of the allegations contained in her statement to the committee. He wanted a copy. According to Hill, "she questioned Brudney closely about his need for the statement and the appropriateness of sending it to him outside Committee channels." Having received assurances he would hold it in confidence, Hill faxed Brudney a copy of

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her statement, although not of the statement she had sent to the committee, for what Brudney received was neither signed nor dated.

While this chronology shows the interplay of groups and staffers opposing Thomas, and their effort to find Hill and steer her to the Judiciary Committee, the depositions Fleming took probably contain information about other contacts between the groups and the staffers, and probably between the groups and Hill, or other persons, including journalists. The Freedom of Information Act does not apply to Congress, of course; so those depositions probably will never be reported, absent a gusher of a leak. (Sources should feel free to call me, by the way.)

Nor will we know all that Fleming found out about events after Hill's first fax of September 23. But his report does show staffers and groupers hard at work against Thomas. Brudney, we learn, told the Kennedy staff about Hill's submission of a statement to Judiciary, and about her FBI interview, and that Kennedy's people, in turn, told Leahy's staff. We learn, too, that Metzenbaum was upset when he heard from Senator Biden that the FBI report referred to his staffers generally and to Brudney by name. Fleming writes that the staffers then decided to "draw back from any active involvement with Hill's allegations." That was easy to do, since they had a substitute team ready to take the field—the groups. Corr and Brudney called Lichtman of the Women's Defense Fund and Wade Henderson of the NAACP, advising them not to look to Metzenbaum's office "for any initiative on Hill's allegations." Corr's notes of his conversation with Lichtman contained a sentence attributed to her: "I going [sic] after affidavit." Fleming reports that neither Corr nor Lichtman remembered her using those precise words, and Lichtman denied to Fleming ever seeking or receiving Hill's affidavit. Another Corr note of a call with Brudney showed Lichtman as having said that she had "authorized a friend to talk to Nina," meaning Nina Totenberg; Ricki Seidman made a similar note of "almost identical substance." To Fleming, Lichtman denied doing any such thing, but by this point—the weekend of September 28—word of Hill's allegations was spreading "among the interested Washington community."

Phelps and Totenberg were soon on the story. "We do not know from Totenberg what caused her to track the Hill story only after the Committee had voted on Friday, September 27," writes Fleming. But he believes she was given Hill's statement early the next week. As Fleming points out, NPR's vice president for news, William Buzenberg, actually told *Vanity Fair* that Totenberg had Hill's "affidavit" five days before she "spilled the beans." On October 2, Nan Aron of the Alliance was back in

Fleming's chronology, calling Hill's former roommate, Sonia Jarvis, whom Hill had kept informed, to ask whether the Oklahoma law professor was "prepared to go public." To which Jarvis said no, an answer she repeated to Aron the next day.

But the groups and the staffers—and the journalists—would not be denied. Fleming reports a meeting in Metzenbaum's office on October 2. Attending were "Senators Metzenbaum, Simon and Kennedy, certain of their staffers and various representatives from the groups opposing the nominee." In hallway conversations afterward, Senator Simon and Kate Michelman of the National Abortion Rights Action League were heard talking about the "Oklahoma thing." So were Brudney and Wade Henderson of the NAACP. According to Fleming, Hill first talked with Totenberg on October 3. Totenberg by this time was very busy: She talked back and forth with not only Hill but also Seidman and Lichtman. On the morning of October 5, after one of her conversations with Totenberg, Seidman called Brudney, telling him that "Totenberg had spoken to Hill and said Hill would answer questions but would not provide her affidavit," which Seidman, from the Fleming report, appeared to think Totenberg did not have. Given Buzenberg's public comments, Totenberg had the statement in hand. But as Fleming suggests, she might have been puzzled as to its authenticity, especially if her copy was the unsigned and undated statement Hill had faxed to Brudney. From Fleming's account of the Seidman-Brudney conversation, Seidman, who told Brudney she did not understand the "significance of Hill's statement," could have learned from Brudney that he had a draft copy; and note this: having completed his memo on sexual harassment for Metzenbaum on the same day that he'd asked for a copy of Hill's Judiciary statement, Brudney did not destroy it but kept it in his briefcase until after the story broke. It was therefore always available for copying—and passing on to someone else.

At this point in the report's chronology there is a gap, for we are not told what Seidman or Brudney did after their phone conversation. Both denied leaking; Brudney specifically denied giving a copy of his document to anyone. And Fleming reports "no evidence of communication between Brudney and Totenberg or any other journalist," a statement that begs another question: What about communication with the groups? Instead, we learn that Hill and Totenberg talked by

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phone, and that in this conversation Totenberg said she had Hill's affidavit. Hill asked the reporter to read it. Totenberg did. Whereupon Hill agreed to cooperate, and a tape was rolled. Later that afternoon, Fleming reports, Totenberg called Seidman (a staffer) and Lichtman (a grouper) to tell her the story would run the next day. It was Seidman, by the way, who also was in constant conversation that same week with *Newsday*'s Phelps; Seidman in fact told Phelps that, in regard to Anita Hill, he "might be on to something."

Whenever the press is incurious about some important public business involving the Fourth Estate, someone else needs to step in and find out and report as much as can be known. Fleming did that and did it well, and his lengthy, detailed report turns out to have achieved the additional purpose of describing what Fred Barnes has called Washington's "New Iron Triangle"—the triangle formed at the time of critical judicial nominations by liberal Senate staffers, such as James Brudney; liberal interest groups, such as the Alliance for Justice and People for the American Way; and members of the press, such as, first and foremost, NPR's Totenberg.

Last October, in a front-page mid-hearing analysis, Al Kamen of the *Washington Post* did not use Barnes's term, but might as well have, when he pointed to "an increasingly symbiotic relationship between committee staffers, liberal interest groups, and the news media" in a confirmation "role once played almost exclusively by the Senate." I understand that Kamen caught some grief for mentioning the news media in this way, but he was telling the truth, which the Fleming report has now amplified. Although largely ignored, it is "must" reading for anyone who wants to understand the triangular politics of judicial confirmation and the peculiar political culture of the nation's capital.

And there is a final, legal point. Fleming's investigation only went so far as the two reporters and the Senate Rules Committee allowed him. Phelps and Totenberg refused to talk about their sources. Fleming decided to subpoena them, but the Rules Committee did not back him, refusing, in effect; to compel reporters' testimony. The law does not give reporters some kind of right to silence. Neither the Constitution nor any Supreme Court decision entitles the press in this way. And under the standards developed in the lower federal courts, judicial enforcement of a subpoena most likely would have occurred. But the Rules Committee did not have the guts to back Fleming. And the press has lacked the decency to report the merits of the legal arguments in this case, much less the manifest weakness of its own.

What the press has been interested in, of course, is making sure that there won't be another Fleming-like investigation focusing on every Tom, Dick, and Harriet staffer in a position to know what happened. Reporters don't want another Fleming "chilling" their sources. They want those wonderful people all to themselves. ❐

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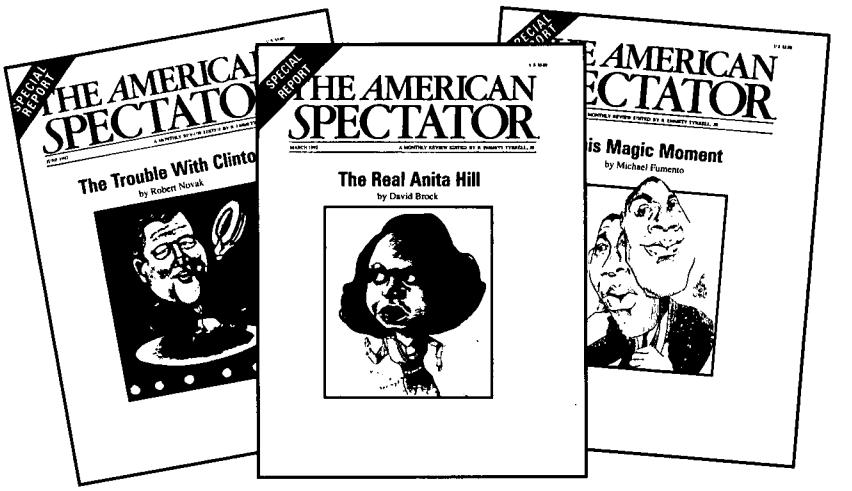

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Fashion Plays

by James Bowman

"Movies are art, now more than ever," says Tim Robbins as a studio executive addressing a crowd of beautiful people at a charity benefit in Robert Altman's *The Player*. The joke, such as it is, is that we know the executive is concerned only with money in the films he makes, not at all with art. Does that surprise you? If not, you may have as hard a time as I did in seeing what is supposed to be a "brilliant satire" of Hollywood in this film. If that is what it is, it is the first satire in history that is loved more by its ostensible targets, the Hollywood insiders among whom it is so popular, than it is by anyone else. Perhaps it is really a satire on the audience for being suckers enough to watch this stuff.

Yet there is another irony in Robbins's words about "art" that is less obvious. It is that *The Player* itself is an example of a movie that pretends to be art but cannot be judged by artistic standards. This is *not* because it is entertainment instead. All art should be entertaining and all entertainment is to some extent artful. From the critic's point of view the two categories are more or less co-extensive. But there is another kind of film that is neither entertainment nor art except in the most superficial sense. It goes through the motions of trying to look like both, but its real purposes seem to lie elsewhere.

The real purpose of *The Player*, for example, is to be Hollywood's home movie. Although it has a standard plot and a certain amount of character development, although it displays some fresh and inventive camera work, its only real reason for existing is to delight the people who are in it and their admirers. Any time you get a lot of cameo roles it is a bad sign, but this film has more cameo roles than most pictures have roles. Everybody wants to be a part of the brilliant satire on themselves, and the result is not a satire at all but a series of in jokes. If you don't know, or care, that Cher doesn't wear red or that Burt Reynolds had a fight with a director called Dick Richards it means little to you.

Enough of the jokes are comprehensible and enough of the plot engages our interest that the entertainment is passable. Yet it cannot be judged as entertainment because its purpose is not to entertain. Its purpose is to congratulate Hollywood for being such a completely outrageous place—outrageous as in, "Did you have a good time?"/"Outrageous!" When Robbins's character gets away with murder, the film offers no shred of moral indignation but something like its opposite. Like Tom Wolfe's "masters of the universe," these studio executives can only be admired for picking up the option on the screen rights to reality. Getting off the hook on a murder charge is just another way in which the boss exercises final script approval on life, which of course is not real life but life as we should all like it to be. If the master of the universe doesn't get brought down to earth you have just another Hollywood fairy tale rather than a satire. "Guarantee me that ending and you've got a deal" is the last line of—and the last word on—the film.

But *The Player* is far from being the only recent picture to defy criticism as art. Most of the others are what we might call designer movies, typically "Masterpiece Theatre"–style costume dramas. Designer movies are like fine art reproductions in that the point of them is not to convey a genuinely artistic experience but to make a statement about the taste of those who make them and those who consume them. Their appeal is to a limited—indeed, a select—audience on the strength of their associations with approved cultural artifacts, especially classic novels. Each of them offers a whole set of challenges to the filmmaker: not to entertain or thrill or move us but to get right the costumes and the customs, the period detail of dress, decor, manners, and language.

The audience for such pictures is growing all the time. Even an ostensibly popular film like *The Babe* seems to me to have more of the designer movie about it than it has anything genuinely entertaining. There is no real point to it, but it can be admired for its skillful re-creation of the period settings and for the skillful acting of John Goodman as Babe Ruth. You could say that these films are really educational—contemporary versions of the old-fashioned costume dramas about Napoleon or Julius Caesar or the Cecil B. DeMille biblical epics. For a post-literate culture they are the equivalent of the ornamentation on medieval cathedrals: the only way for ordinary folk to know anything about history. Such sermons on celluloid cannot be judged as artistic experiences but only as one would judge a *National Geographic* documentary.

For some reason, E.M. Forster's novels are the in thing for designer movies this year. Charles Sturridge's version of *Where Angels Fear to Tread* and Ismail Merchant and James Ivory's *Howard's End* have between them received many column inches in the *New York Times*'s Sunday "Arts and Leisure" section and were written up together in *W*—two of the natural homes for the audience of designer movies. *Where Angels Fear to Tread* is the less palatable of the two films. You really have to work at it to de-

James Bowman, The American Spectator*'s movie critic, is the American editor of the* Times Literary Supplement.

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rive a thrill from the nastiness of the respectable British upper-middle classes of a century ago. When a wealthy British matron, played by Helen Mirren, marries a strapping young Italian lad, the match may have been doomed from the beginning, as her uptight British family all predict, but it is the uptight family, especially Judy Davis, who does a splendid job of portraying a hysterical spinster, whom we are invited to hate.

But there I go again, trying to judge a designer movie as if it were a work of art. It doesn't matter that Forster's sub-Freudian crusade against inhibition and bourgeois respectability looks today like flogging the deadest of dead horses. For Sturridge the book's themes simply come with the package. You've got to take them if you want the book, and you need the book just as you need your completion bond: as the work of an undeniably important novelist, it is your guarantee of artistic significance. And you need that to get the designer's cachet. The late Victorian marionettes Sturridge has to work with serve the same purpose as the religious or mythological iconography in classic art: they are the way we know that it *is* classic art. Once we know that, we are then free to enjoy the film for the pretty pictures of exotic places, the costumes, the music, and the sweetly melancholy ambiance of a past that is safely dead.

Howard's End treats similar themes with more subtlety and charm, but the differences between the two films are of degree rather than of kind. Helena Bonham-Carter appears in both as a slightly repressed spinster who longs to become even more slightly repressed. The monstrously respectable upper-middle classes also figure prominently in both, but in *Howard's End* the escape from respectability takes place in Germany rather than Italy. In both, the pictures are pretty—although in *Howard's End* they are of the English countryside (complete with late-Romantic nature writing by George Meredith) rather than Tuscany—the costumes are very handsome, the music is atmospheric, every detail of the architecture and of interiors is authentic, and the sense of the real past is non-existent.

Oddly enough, *Howard's End* is truer to Forster for having left out his main idea. "Only connect" was the motto that the novel was meant to illustrate—by showing that there was some way of connecting the world of art and literature and contemplation, represented by the Schlegels, with the world of action and business, represented by the Wilcoxes. But the whole tendency of the book, brought out even more clearly in the film, is really to *dis*connect, and with all possible dispatch, from having anything to do with the boorish, greedy, vulgar, hypocritical Wilcoxes. Ivory makes Henry Wilcox (Anthony Hopkins) very slightly sympathetic, but no one looking at this film could find anything even slightly attractive about his way of life as compared with that of the Schlegels. Forster's retreat into civilized preciosity (muttering "only connect" all the way) presages the split between art and the world of politics and business that has characterized our culture ever since.

Among many other contemporary consequences of this split—including all the fuss about the NEA—is the designer movie itself, which is a way of conveying a simulacrum of artistic experience to those who are not interested in the real thing but only in having their good taste ratified. If that sounds harsh, it is not meant to imply that many people do not go to films like this in the hope of finding something more like real art. That occasionally they will get it is the hopeful message of the film of the month, Zhang Yimou's *Raise the Red Lantern*. This period costume drama, set in China in the 1920s, has all the ingredients of a designer movie but transcends them to become artistically engaging, even if it is not of the first rank.

If, for example, the photography in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* or *Howard's End* is conventionally gorgeous but rather clichéd and uninteresting, that in *Raise the Red Lantern*, as in the director's previous film, *Ju Dou*, is not only beautiful but full of character and originality. Some of the interior shots of this rich man's house inhabited by four wives, all of whom are plotting against one another, are as carefully composed as Vermeer paintings. They have the same static, spacious quality, and they use light and color and contrast in the same evocative way. But the effect is not imitative or merely tasteful; the dramatic need for such formal images is immediately apparent.

For if the direction is stylized, so is the world that the director presents. His compositions complement the elaborate formal rituals of the rich man's household, within which an intensely naturalistic drama plays itself out. Passion, jealousy, hatred, and ambition are tightly circumscribed by these formal and spatial constraints, but they are all the more forceful for being kept within tight boundaries. The power games played by the four wives present us with recognizably domestic situations that suggest at the same time a more universal theme of power, exploitation, and rivalry.

The story is told mainly from the point of view of the fourth wife, played by Gong Li, the beautiful actress who also made such an impression in *Ju Dou*. The husband is a shadowy figure whose face we hardly even glimpse and whose ruthless insistence on his own supremacy in the household is simply a given: to the disappointment of feminists, no doubt, it has little dramatic weight. All the emotion resides in the struggle among the four women to be most favored wife and to wield the power over the others that is the favorite's prerogative. The symbol of the master's choice is the red lantern hung outside the door of the woman he will sleep with each night, and Gong Li, who obviously has no love for the man, finds herself competing tooth and nail with the others to be so chosen.

But her power, like that of the other wives, is exercised only minimally through her sexual attractiveness. Mostly it depends on finding out the other women's secrets and using the information against them where it will do most good. Lies and treachery and one-upmanship are the stuff of daily life and any attempt to escape from the snakepit is punishable by death. Janet Maslin, in the *New York Times*, tries to impose a feminist interpretation on this situation by describing it as "a fairly hellish vision of life without the option of divorce"—which is a typically obtuse and politically correct comment to make. In fact, it is a fairly hellish vision of life itself, which it takes the stylized and exotic setting of mandarin China to bring home to us. For once the point of the costumes and the scenery, the music and the manners, is not to register a designer trademark but to serve a dramatic purpose in a genuine work of art. ❐

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JEFFERSON DAVIS
THE MAN AND HIS HOUR: A BIOGRAPHY

William C. Davis

HarperCollins/784 pages/$35

reviewed by PAUL JOHNSON

It is now over 130 years since the Civil War began, and with the political and economic transformation of the South during the last generation, ghosts have been laid and passions forgotten, and folk memories have become impersonal history. The South lives on mainly through its generals, Lee, Jackson, and Stuart, even through its bad ones, like Beauregard and Bragg. The politicians have been pushed into the shadows. That is not surprising. The greatest of the South's statesmen, John C. Calhoun, the man who gave it the ideology of states' rights, who taught it that slavery was a benevolent institution, and who laid the political foundations of the Confederacy, died a decade before it came into physical existence. The men who actually set it up were, for the most part, second-rate and unmemorable.

But there was one exception. Jefferson Davis (1808-89), Calhoun's political heir insofar as he had one, president of the Confederacy from its reckless birth to its pitiful death-agony, was flawed and blinkered both as man and statesman, with huge weaknesses of judgment and capacity. But he was not small in any sense of the word. Six feet tall, slim, ramrod-straight, "a soldierly bearing, a fine head, and intellectual face . . . a look of culture and refinement about him," he could "infuse courage into the bosom of a coward, and self-respect and pride into the breasts of the most abandoned." To his cause he brought a passion "concentrated into a white heat, that threw out no sparks, no fitful flashes, glowing [instead] with an intense but not an angry glare." These judgments by contemporaries were endorsed even by critics and enemies. Thomas Cobb of Georgia said, "He is not great . . . [but] the power of will he has, made him all he is."

Davis, the man made by will-power, has now been searchingly examined in a full-scale biography by one of the most experienced of Civil War historians. Thorough, fair-minded, and perceptive, William C. Davis (no relation) resolves most of the mysteries about his subject: how he rose, why he failed, the reasonings of his mind and the sources of his appeal. In the process, the author gives us shattering insights into the weaknesses of the Southern cause and its doomed struggle. This is a workmanlike, sound, brass-and-mahogany book, the stuff of which convincing history is made.

The conventional portrait of Davis as an old-fashioned Southern politician is inexact. His middle name was Finis because he was born when his mother was 47, the last of ten. He had a modern-style upbringing: his father rejected any kind of corporal punishment, and the boy was cosseted by big sisters, and brothers, three of them old enough to have served in the War of 1812. When his father died, Davis's eldest brother Joseph, a successful Mississippi cotton planter, took over the role of mentor and guardian. After an education under Roman Catholic Dominican friars at Wilkinson County Academy and at the famous Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, Davis went to West Point on the nomination of the War Secretary, Calhoun, thereafter his political model and leader. His career as a professional army officer was checkered by rows with his superiors, courts martial, and frustration at slow promotion. When he married the daughter of General Zachary Taylor, he left the army and Joseph set him up as a planter.

It is important, as his biographer shows, to grasp the nature of Davis's involvement with the cotton economy. Though brother Joseph at one time planted 11,000 acres and was a wealthy man, Davis never owned outright his 800-acre Hurricane estate, and never possessed more than seventy-four slaves. He was essentially his brother's dependent. As a planter, Joseph was enlightened. No slave was ever flogged. Families were kept together. The slaves judged and punished themselves. One testified: "We had good grub and good clothes and nobody worked hard." Another: "Dem Davises never let nobody touch one of their niggers." The community at Davis Bend on the river, said General Taylor, was "a little paradise." Jeff Davis shared to the full Joseph's attitudes, and was anti–blood sports to boot. He treated his black bodyservant, James Pemberton, with exquisite courtesy and put him in charge of the plantation in his absences. When his first wife died of malaria, he acquired a sadness that never left him, though he eventually married again, a girl half his age. His melancholy was aggravated by poor health, including terrifying facial pains and chronic hepatitis that eventually left him blind in one eye. He suffered from insomnia, and his chief pleasure was reading—Virgil, Byron, Burns, Scott. Not for him the swaggering society of New Orleans or Charleston. His only genuflection to Southern male habits was a propensity to challenge critics to duels, though he never actually fought any. He made a point of returning any salute from a black with an elaborate bow: "I cannot allow any negro to outdo me in courtesy."

The overriding weakness of this seemingly civilized and well-meaning man was lack of imagination, compounded by ignorance. America in the 1840s and 1850s was already an immense country, but travel was still difficult and expensive, and it is hard for us to grasp how little most Americans knew of the societies outside their region. Davis paid

Paul Johnson is the author of The Birth of the Modern *and* Modern Times *(HarperCollins).*

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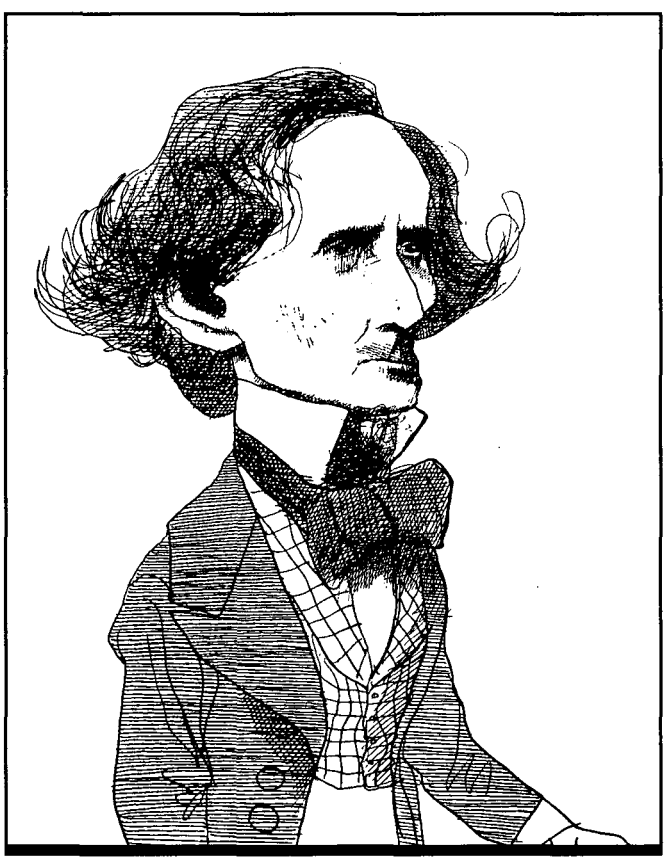
only one visit to New England and was surprised to find the people friendly. Until he became president of the Confederacy, he knew little of the South beyond his own part of Mississippi. He assumed the treatment of slaves at Davis Bend was typical and refused to believe stories of cruelty: that was simply Northern malice and Abolitionist invention.

On this narrowness of vision he built a political philosophy that did not admit of argument. Blacks, he maintained, were better off as slaves in the South than as tribesmen in Africa: "I have no fear of insurrection, no more dread of our slaves than I have of our cattle. . . . Our slaves are happy and contented." Not only was it in the interest of blacks to be slaves, it was likewise to their benefit that slavery be extended. It was wrong for whites to own more slaves than they knew well, as he did. If cruelty occurred, it was because sheer numbers undermined the personal owner-slave relationship. So, the more slavery spread out, geographically, the more humane it would be. That was the argument for dismantling Mexico, turning its territories into new states, and making slavery lawful there and even north of the Missouri line. Slave-owners must be able to take their slaves with them into the new territories just as immigrants had always taken any other form of property, such as cattle or wagons. Joseph had dinned into him the fundamental axiom: "Any interference with the unqualified property of the owner in a slave was an abolition principle."



Davis, then, believed the Southern case for slavery and its extension rested on firm moral foundations. Indeed, he was morally aggressive, accusing the North of hypocrisy. He said to Northerners: "You were the men who imported these Negros into this country. You enjoyed the benefits resulting from their carriage and sale; and you reaped the largest profits accruing from the introduction of the slaves." Abolition was nothing but "perfidious interference in the rights of other men." He did not see the arrangements of 1820 and 1850 as "compromises": they were Southern concessions, the limit to which the South could reasonably be expected to go. Further limitations on slavery were merely Northern attacks on the South motivated not by morality but by envy and hatred: "The mask is off. The question is before us. It is a struggle for political power." Thus put to the test, Southerners must (in his brother's phrase) "be prepared to act as men." The Constitution was on their side. The federal government had no natural authority: "It is the creature of the states. As such it could have no inherent power, all it possesses was delegated by the states." If what Davis called "the self-sustaining majority" continued its oppressive and unlawful campaign against the South, the "Confederation," as he called it, should be dissolved: "We should part peaceably and avoid staining the battlefields of the Revolution with the blood of a civil war."

This philosophy, derived from Joseph and Calhoun and his own lonely musings, polished and consolidated over the years, Davis held as axiomatic. It is significant that he never saw himself as an extremist, especially over breaking up the union. "I was slower and more reluctant than others," he wrote. "I was behind the general opinion of the people of [Mississippi] as to the propriety of prompt secession." But if his basic assumptions about slavery were challenged, he responded with paranoia. This sprang not just from his Southern conditioning but from a dominant streak of self-righteousness in his character. His biographer shows in great detail from a variety of incidents in his early life, in the army, in his domestic and public quarrels, that once he had made up his mind and adopted a position, he treated any attempt to argue him out of it as inadmissible, an assault upon his integrity. As he put it to his second wife, Varina: "I cannot bear to be suspected or complained of, or misconstrued after explanation." "He speaks with an air," said Senator Isaac P. Walker of Wisconsin, "which seems to say 'Nothing more can be said, I know it all, it must be as I think.'" Davis himself said he ignored press criticism: "Proud in the consciousness of my own rectitude, I have looked upon it with the indifference which belongs to the assurance that I am right."

All this suggests that Davis was better suited to military command than to politics. That was Varina's view: "He did not know the arts of a politician and would not practice them if understood." Davis got into politics in his late thirties, but the Mexican War offered a chance to resume his army career. He was elected colonel of a regiment of Mississippi volunteers, had the foresight to equip them with the new Whitney Rifle, was favored by his commanding general and former father-in-law, Taylor, in seeing action at Monterrey and Buena Vista, and distinguished himself in both these much-publicized battles. The Mexican War, a rather disreputable affair if the truth were told, was the great proving ground for future American bigshots, both political and military. Grant and Sherman, Lee and Bragg were there. Taylor went on to the White House, Campbell, colonel of the Tennesseans, to become governor of Tennessee, many of the volunteer officers to the House and Senate. The fighting among the American regiments and their

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officers for the lion's share of the glory was much fiercer than their animosity against the Mexicans, who were mere pawns in a battle for fame and political kudos. Davis was described by General Bliss, Taylor's chief-of-staff, as "the best volunteer officer in the army," and President Polk offered him a general's commission. But he had been badly wounded in the foot at Buena Vista and chose instead to be nominated to the Senate.

In politics, Davis found it natural to be called "the Calhoun of Mississippi," and, when the old fire-eater died, to assume Elijah's Mantle. It was equally natural, when his friend Franklin Pierce became President, to accept office as War Secretary (1853) where he became perhaps the most powerful voice in the cabinet and a forceful administrator. But his weakness quickly made its appearance. He got into a series of arguments with his general-in-chief Winfield Scott, mostly over trivialities. Scott was arrogant and self-righteous too, but Davis, as his political superior, might have been expected to behave with more sense and dignity. One of Davis's letters to Scott ran on for twenty-seven foolscap pages and was contemptuously described by its recipient as "a book." Everything fell into the hands of the press and made amazing reading. Scott closed his last letter, "Compassion is always due to an enraged imbecile," to which Davis replied that he was "gratified to be relieved of the necessity of further exposing your malignity and depravity."

The episode suggested that Davis was not a man fit to hold supreme office at any time, let alone during a war to decide the fate of a great nation. His biographer skillfully disentangles the complex events that made him just that. Having ruled himself out as the Democratic candidate in 1860, Davis made a last-minute and foredoomed attempt to avoid a three-way split in the party's vote by trying to persuade Stephen Douglas to stand down. This may have raised his reputation as a conciliator and a statesman, but after Lincoln was elected on a minority vote and the Southern states began to bolt the union, Davis's instinct was to become a general in the Mississippi contingent or, if pressed, commander-in-chief of the Southern Army. Instead, when the first six states to secede—South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Alabama—met early in February to draw up a constitution, Davis was already talked of as the obvious choice for president. His only real rival, Tooms of Georgia, wrecked his chances by getting publicly drunk several nights running, and Davis was chosen more or less unanimously.

Davis said in his inaugural that the Confederacy was born "of a peaceful appeal to the ballot box." But that was not true. As his biographer points out, no state held a referendum on the issue, and it was decided by the 854 members of the various secession conventions, all of them selected by legislatures, not by voters, and 157 of whom voted against. So 697 men, with no popular mandate, decided the fate of 9 million. The popular elections held at the end of 1861 were a non-event. Davis took no steps to give his state and government the legitimacy enjoyed by Lincoln, and his failure explains the belief of many senior Unionists, especially generals like Grant, that a rich, militant minority had hijacked the South. Nor did Davis try to resolve the constitutional dilemma that underlay and undermined the South's war effort: that here was not a unitary nation but a coalition of sovereign states whose ideology compelled them to contribute to their collective defense purely on a voluntary basis. Throughout the war, it remained difficult to persuade a regiment from one state to serve under a general from another.

Davis did not seek, from the start, to mold the South into a war-nation, because he felt it unnecessary. Along with the benevolence of slavery, and the theory of states' rights, he had swallowed the myth that cotton was king: an independent South would flourish as the world beat a path to its doors for "the Great Staple," while the industrial north, "like Venice, Carthage and Tyre will perish: grass will grow on the pavement now worn by constant tread of the human throng which waits upon commerce." Davis not only believed this but, never having traveled, he assumed Europe would rally to the South and made no attempt to woo it by conciliatory diplomacy—with hardly an exception, the men he sent there were inept extremists.

Yet Davis must have had some awareness of Southern weakness. A decade before the war, he had urged that the South prepare itself not only by stockpiling arms and munitions but by encouraging immigration from the North; building railroads to transport its agricultural products itself; creating an industrial base to manufacture its own cotton goods, shoes, hats, blankets, and so forth; and providing state support for higher education so that its cleverer youths were not forced to go North and adopt its ideas. What was to happen to the South in the 1950s and later, Davis called for in the 1850s. But there was no response at the time, and his biographer finds no evidence that Davis followed up his appeal with practical schemes. When the war started, the North held all but one of the economic-demographic cards, and the odds in its favor were lengthening steadily. The ratio in population was 2:1, in free males aged 18-60 no less than 4.4:1. Wealth was 3:1, railroad mileage 2.4:1, merchant-ship tonnage 25:1, factory production 10:1, textiles 14:1, iron 15:1, coal 38:1, firearms production 32:1, farm acreage 3:1, draft animals 1.8:1, livestock 1.5:1, wheat 4.2:1, corn 2:1. In cotton the South had the advantage of 24:1, but it was largely thrown away by overproduction and stockpiling in the endless build-up to the crisis.

Any long war was thus lost before it began, and the South's one chance was to concentrate all its resources on a quick gambler's thrust north that would take Washington, overthrow the Lincoln Administration, and force a compromise allowing the South to go its own way. But, just as the politics of the antebellum South were defensive, seeking to perpetuate a static social system, so its military strategy was fatally defensive as well. Davis didn't help matters when he took his oath of office at face value and tried to defend all the frontiers of the Confederacy. That meant not only protecting 3,500 miles of coastline without a navy but also distributing limited military resources over vast border areas—1,200 miles in Texas alone—which had no natural river or mountain frontiers. Consequently, the South was never able to concentrate sufficient strength for a sustained push northward, and the defensive strategy began to break down as early as the spring of 1862,

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when Admiral Farragut took New Orleans and the Western defenses began to crumble.

Lincoln's struggles to find reliable and aggressive generals are well-known. Davis had the same problems, recounted by his biographer in painful detail. Beauregard and Bragg proved useless, Joseph E. Johnston, like George B. McClellan in the north, timid and irresolute. Three of the best, Jackson, Stuart, and Davis's own favorite, Sydney Johnston, died in battle, leaving only Lee, who could not be everywhere at once. Davis's handling of his military men was in every way inferior to Lincoln's, who learned slowly but surely from his mistakes. Prejudices formed at West Point, in Mexico, and at the War Department, plus his own obstinacy, unwillingness to admit he was ever in the wrong, professional dislike of pushing younger men above their seniors, however incompetent, and a chronic inability to delegate made Davis a disastrous war leader. His acrimonious letters, often about points of military status that had nothing to do with the struggle, contrast sadly with Lincoln's wise and noble epistles.

As the South's cause faltered, every kind of vicious intrigue, military, political, and social, developed. Society in Richmond, chosen as Confederate capital to make Virginia secure to the cause, looked down its nose at the Davises. The ladies noted Varina's dark color and thick lips, compared her to a "refined mulatto cook," and called her "the Empress," a reference to the much-despised Eugénie, Spanish spouse of Napoleon III. Senator Louis T. Wigfall of Texas was a strong Davis man until their wives fell out, and Charlotte Wigfall, a South Carolina snob, called Varina "a coarse western woman" with "objectionable" manners; thereafter Wigfall became an enemy, preaching mutiny and sedition, often while drunk, in the Confederate congress. Colonel Abraham C. Meyers, the Quartermaster General, had to be sacked when his fierce wife termed Varina "an old squaw." Davis made enemies and waged vendettas on his own account, too. It is a curious paradox that ordinary Southerners, who had not been consulted, fought with extraordinary courage and endurance, while their leaders, who had plunged them to Armageddon, were riven by rancorous faction and disloyalty, and many left the stricken scene long before the end.

William Davis gives a somber, enthralling account of the last months of the confederacy. The president's property in Mississippi was seized by the Union army and the whereabouts of his and Varina's hidden treasures betrayed by one of their own slaves. The soldiers cut his carpets into bits as souvenirs, drank his wine, stabbed his portrait with knives, and read all his private papers, selections from which were published by a lip-smacking Northern press. Davis had to sell all his remaining possessions, including carriage and horses, just to live (off ersatz coffee, corn cakes, a bit of bacon). As the fronts collapsed in the spring of 1865, Davis sent Varina off like a tigress, giving her a small Colt and fifty rounds, and the rest of his coinage (the Confederate paper was now worthless), keeping one five-dollar gold piece for himself. He planned to wage guerrilla warfare but was captured on May 8, the Union soldiers singing "We'll hang Jeff Davis from a sour apple tree" and spreading a rumor that he had tried to flee dressed as a woman. He was treated with great cruelty. He spent 720 days, a charge of treason hanging over him, in a dungeon in Fort Monroe, opposite Norfolk, Virginia, the first five of them in leg-irons. There were bugs in his mattress, and he had to drink water from a horse-bucket. He feared hanging, many holding him responsible for the assassination of Lincoln, but as he himself argued, Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor, was a far more bitter personal enemy.

In fact, Johnson never intended to execute Davis, as a murderer, traitor, war criminal, or anything else. The only Southerner who suffered the death penalty was Major Henry Wirz, commandant of the Andersonville Prison Camp. Johnson wanted Davis to apply for a pardon, and when he proudly refused, allowed Dr. John Craven, who visited the fallen leader many times in 1865, to have his diaries, recording their conversations, written up by a popular writer called Charles G. Halpine as *The Prison Life of Jefferson Davis*. It presented him as a tragic hero, and suited Johnson's purpose to rebuff the radical Republicans, who wanted revenge. As a result, a writ of *habeas corpus* got Davis released in May 1867. He was infuriated by the book, which he found vulgar, and frustrated by the failure of his enemies to bring him to trial, being sure—as always—that he could have vindicated himself and proved the absolute legality of his actions. So he went on to outlive virtually all his opponents, half of his own family—including all four of his sons—to meet further misfortunes, to write rambling and inaccurate memoirs, and to end up the grand old man of the South, dying at the age of 82. His funeral in 1889 was the biggest ever held in the South, attracting 200,000. But his epitaph he had pronounced long before, in the last days of the Confederacy: there should be written on his tombstone, he said, "Died of a Theory." A wise remark from a man who usually lacked sound judgment. Enduring states are built on the solid facts of demography, economics, and social need, not on dogmas that ignore them. ❐

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THE VITAL SOUTH: HOW PRESIDENTS ARE ELECTED

Earl Black and Merle Black

Harvard University Press/400 pages/$29.95

reviewed by FRED BARNES

Bad as the blows were, the worst thing that happened to Bill Clinton in the Democratic presidential primaries was not being hit with allegations of cheating on Hillary and dodging the draft. Nope, the worst thing was the consequence of those allegations, both of which Clinton denies, both of which everyone else believes to be true. But don't jump to the wrong conclusion. The consequence I'm referring to isn't the spate of polls showing that a huge chunk of Democrats and a solid majority of overall voters think Clinton lacks the honesty and integrity to be President. I'm referring to something more specific: the South. The allegations all but wiped out Clinton's chance to win a Southern state outside Arkansas—and made Arkansas iffy. And since a Democrat has to win some Southern states to capture the presidency, Clinton is practically a goner.

There's an irony here. The genius of Clinton's candidacy was supposed to be his ability, normally nonexistent among national Democrats, to steal some Southern states from the Republican incumbent. He could appeal to conservative white Democrats and other swing voters in a way that liberal stiffs like Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis never could. Why? He's likable, he's moderate on some social issues, he's not opposed to the use of U.S. military force around the globe, and he's a Southerner. As it turns out, all that isn't enough, given that womanizing and draft evasion strike at the heart of the Southern white vote. There are millions of Baptists and almost as many Pentecostals, all folks with a rigid moral code. You can imagine their view of infidelity. And if there's a region of America more military-oriented than the South, I haven't heard of it. Draft-dodging is not a venial sin in the South. It's a capital crime.

My premise ought to be pretty clear: it's that the South is now the pivotal region in presidential elections. In fact, it has been since at least 1932. For five straight elections up to 1948, it was the critical ingredient in Democratic victories. Then Southern states started going Republican, first for Eisenhower, then for Nixon, and finally in landslide fashion for Reagan. In 1980, Reagan won ten

of the eleven states of the Confederacy (Georgia stuck with Carter). In 1984, he took all eleven. And Bush did the same in 1988 (drawing 60 percent of the vote in Georgia). Today there's a built-in GOP advantage in the South that aids any Republican presidential nominee, including a vulnerable Bush.

Though largely ignored by academics and the media, the switch of the South from Democratic to Republican is the most significant political event of post–World War II America. Political scientists Earl Black of the University of South Carolina and his brother Merle of Emory University are among the few serious chroniclers of this transformation, and they're a lot better than Kevin Phillips. Their 1988 book, *Politics and Society in the South*, argued persuasively that the South had fundamentally changed in political character (but not ideology). *The Vital South* is an even more impressive work, detailing vividly how Republicans took control of presidential politics in the South and how that gives them almost a lock on winning the White House. (By the way, I've run my theory of Clinton's fall from grace with Southern voters by the Blacks and they generally agree.)

Democratic hegemony in the South lasted as long as the party winked at white supremacy there. Democrats, Franklin Roosevelt especially, made a Faustian pact with Southern segregationists: you support us and we'll let you handle race relations however you want. But the pact was abrogated in 1948, when the Democratic convention adopted a civil rights plank. And the Democratic coalition slowly began to unravel. In 1968, following a decade of civil rights legislation and racial unrest, it shattered completely.

Republicans realized they didn't need black votes to win the South. So why pander to blacks and drive away white Southerners? But race wasn't the main ingredient in the South's transformation. The appeal of Republicans "goes far beyond concerns about race," the Blacks insist. "The perennial issue of fostering prosperity has usually worked in favor of the GOP." Republican presidential candidates have also benefited from being interventionist and hawkish in foreign affairs. And they've been shrewd enough to emphasize "the importance of symbolic conservative values, including the preservation of traditional family values, the importance of religion, support for capital punishment, and opposition to gun control." In short, Republicans have been conservative. That produced huge majorities. They need 57 or 58 percent of the white vote to win Southern states. In the last five presidential elections, the median white Republican vote in the South was 67 percent.

Republicans don't have an automatic majority in presidential races, but they're

Fred Barnes is a senior editor of the New Republic.

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close. In examining the elections from 1972 to 1988, the Blacks calculated that 44 percent of the Southern presidential electorate consists of core Republicans. Another 18 percent are swing voters who also vote Republican regularly. Core white Democrats are only 24 percent, and blacks, also overwhelmingly Democratic, are 14 percent. "In presidential elections after the Great Society," the Blacks write, "for the first time in American history, the South led the North as a source of dependable Republican electoral votes."

And the GOP base in the South is growing in importance. "Beginning in 1992 the South alone will contain 54 percent of the electoral votes needed to elect a President," the authors say. Obviously that's too big a bloc for Democrats to write off. There's also a historical fact to contend with. "There is no example in American history of the Democrats losing the entire South but winning the presidency by securing almost seven-tenths of the northern electoral vote." To the contrary. The only Democrat to win the presidency since 1964, Carter, swept every Southern state but Virginia.

The Blacks maintain that the barriers to a Democratic breakthrough are not insurmountable. The trouble is, a Democratic candidate has to thread the eye of a needle. The nominee must cleverly appeal to conservative and moderate swing voters and to blacks. Carter managed this, and Clinton is trying. Carter got 47 percent of the white Southern vote, compared to 28 percent for Mondale and 32 percent for Dukakis. Also needed for Democrats to win is a Republican catastrophe, "some combination of Republican policy failures, disappointing economic performance, and the nomination of a conspicuously flawed GOP candidate."

These conditions don't quite prevail at the moment, but think about it: policy failures, a weak economy, a less-than-mesmerizing Republican nominee—that sounds like the Bush era to me. And Clinton is Jimmy Carter reborn in his ideological muddiness and appeal to moderates. What's missing is Carter's moral probity. Without the infidelity and draft-dodging, Clinton would be a formidable threat in the South. Tarred with those, he's not. Once again, George Bush is a lucky man. ❐

THE CHAIRMAN
JOHN J. McCLOY: THE MAKING OF THE AMERICAN ESTABLISHMENT

Kai Bird

Simon & Schuster/800 pages/$30

reviewed by ADAM PLATT

Among the men endlessly credited with shaping this American Century, John J. McCloy is a muted figure. During nearly five decades in and out of public life, he never attained cabinet rank. He lacked Dean Acheson's panache. He didn't have Bob Lovett's wit, or George Kennan's mystic intellect. He described himself as a "legman": an expediter, a steady hand at the wheel. But McCloy, as Kai Bird's diligent, colorless biography makes clear, was everywhere. As a banker (Chase), proconsul (Germany), and foundation chief (Ford), he moved quietly through the gray, convergent worlds of high policy and high finance.

Bird means to set McCloy up as an archetype for this country's vanished postwar "Establishment," and I suppose this is fair. The son of a Philadelphia hairdresser, McCloy attended Amherst and Harvard Law. In New York, he found his way to the white-shoe firm of Cravath, Henderson, and de Gersdorff. He made his legal name extracting reparations from the German government on behalf of claimants for the Black Tom shipyard, sabotaged during the First World War. A devout clubman and ace tennis player, McCloy caught the eye of Colonel Henry Stimson, who brought him to the War Department as a consultant and trouble-shooter.

In Washington, McCloy, who, like many straight men, had a furtive, adventurous side, busied himself with counterespionage work. After Pearl Harbor, Stimson asked him to oversee the internment of all American Japanese citizens. McCloy performed this distasteful task without batting an eye. Stimson instilled in his men a rabid sense of decency and disinterest, but McCloy was not above expediency. He tabled plans to bomb Auschwitz because the planes couldn't be spared. As High Commissioner for Occupied Germany, McCloy buckled under local pressure and pardoned a number of Nazis, including the arms merchant Alfred Krupp.

In many ways, this tour of Germany was the closest Jack McCloy ever came to the history of his time. Unlike the other so-called Wise Men, he played no central policy role in the Truman Administration. Eisenhower wanted him as secretary of state, but thought Dulles would appease the Republican right. When Dulles went down with cancer, McCloy was left in the wings again. Kennedy offered him Treasury or Defense, both of which McCloy turned down. He became Kennedy's disarmament chief instead, but left the job before his major achievement, the Test Ban Treaty, was ever signed.

McCloy had a lawyer's ability to break down problems and find common ground. He exuded what Kennedy called "cheerful wisdom and steady effectiveness." No great brooder or policy man, he nonetheless got things done. He negotiated for Kennedy the actual withdrawal of the missiles from Cuba. Within months of assuming the chairmanship of Chase bank, he presided over what was then the largest bank merger in the country's history. The Rockefellers, like countless corporate clients, used his ancient inside connections to endless effect. Past 80, he helped them spring the Shah from exile in Mexico. →

Adam Platt is co-author of Joseph W. Alsop's memoirs "I've Seen the Best of It" *(W. W. Norton).*

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Bird documents McCloy's achievements in a workmanlike, judicious way. But this is a plodding book. The big themes, like the big men who peopled McCloy's world, stay flat on the page. The Chairman himself comes off as a chalky, cardboard character, which perhaps he was. Bird's main rhetorical line—McCloy's place atop the elite ruling Establishment—is not so much evoked as listed. The names, places, and clubs familiar to Wise Men fans everywhere appear again and again. The claim of *Harper's* magazine that McCloy was "the most influential private citizen in America," is even mentioned twice.

Part of Bird's problem is his subject. John McCloy, in pure historical terms, was a marginal figure. Like Clark Clifford, who in many ways was an evil twin, he flourished as a backroom adviser and "hidden vizier." His contributions to his times and country were often ineffable and, finally, emblematic. Their recreation requires the kind of literary conjuring that Bird either could not or refused to do. That McCloy, in person, was a happy, unremarkable man, "a jovial gnome," as Henry Kissinger called him, does not help. "The Chairman" never cooperated fully with Bird, protesting that people made too much of his career. Perhaps he was right. ❐

BLACK WATER

Joyce Carol Oates

E. P. Dutton/154 pages/$17

reviewed by JOHN PODHORETZ

When you or I have a few hours to kill, we generally go to a movie or watch some TV. When Joyce Carol Oates has a few hours to kill, she knocks off a book. At least, that's the impression you get from reading her latest novella, a bizarre and utterly pointless gloss on Chappaquiddick called *Black Water*. The only praiseworthy thing about it is its brevity—perhaps 30,000 words—which allows its readers to feel virtuous for spending an hour or so keeping up with the latest in contemporary fiction.

Oates has produced a pitch-perfect novel for the cultural moment. *Black Water* is a potboiler with pretensions, a stew of tabloid TV and Stephen King Grand Guignol transformed into something acceptable, even Important, because of its author's unwarranted literary eminence.

John Podhoretz, a visiting fellow at the Hudson Institute, is writing a book about the Bush White House to be published next year by Simon & Schuster.

The book plays like one of those real-life-but-with-actors scenes on "A Current Affair" or "Hard Copy." A woman in her twenties meets a U.S. senator at a party and goes for a drive with him. He drives off a bridge, the car ends up in the water,

and she drowns while he escapes. Oates does change a few things—the story is updated to last year from 1969, it all takes place in Maine instead of Martha's Vineyard, the woman's name is Kelly Kelleher instead of Mary Jo Kopechne, and the senator is simply an important politician and not a member of America's most fatally glamorous family. But that is the extent of the dramatic license she takes.

Black Water begins with the car going off the bridge into the water and then stays firmly within its heroine's head, as she flashes back through the events of the fatal day and her relations with men, from her father (who is a fascist) through her serious boyfriend (who done her wrong) to the senator (her longtime idol). "Am I going to die—like this?" Kelly keeps thinking, in the florid, cliché-ridden prose that is Oates's stock in trade. True to bathetic form, Oates takes ghoulish glee in her descriptions of how Kelly has been made immobile by the buckling of the car's roof, how she desperately tries to keep her head in an air pocket as water fills the car, how she doesn't know whether she is right side up or upside down, and how the water tastes of oil and sewage.

In breathless run-on sentences that are intended to give the book urgency but just leave it sounding hysterical, she fills us in on Kelly's life—complete with eating disorder—in a psychological portrait that, for sheer insight, rivals a *Cosmopolitan* quiz. Oates wants to show how the desperate desire of American girls to be loved leads them to be victimized instead at the hands of men. But while that may be the author's intention, ultimately *Black Water* is merely a garish exploitation of a genuine American political outrage.

Oates has no real interest in why, after two decades, Chappaquiddick remains a national obsession—in how his family's celebrity, money, and power led Teddy Kennedy to the appallingly correct assumption that he could do just about anything and get away with it. Oates has turned Teddy Kennedy, that exceptional symbol of evil, into an Everyman for man-haters. Speaking on behalf of all males, I resent being compared to Teddy Kennedy, even metaphorically. ❐

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THE SOVIET MAFIA: A SHOCKING EXPOSE OF ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE USSR

Arkady Vaksberg

St. Martin's Press/285 pages/$24.95

reviewed by JONAS BERNSTEIN

Last July, a month prior to the abortive hard-line coup that would prove Soviet Communism's undoing, I was in Moscow researching an article on crime. One of my first stops was the Ministry of Internal Affairs, domain of the unlamented Boris Pugo, who would take his own life in the wake of the August 19 events. I was at first struck by the seemingly non-propagandistic presentation by Pugo's spokesmen: they bombarded me with statistics showing that every imaginable type of crime—murder, extortion, prostitution, banking and financial scams, arms and narcotics trafficking—was on the rise.

The motive for this candor, however, was soon apparent: the Ministry's explanation was that "so-called popular fronts"—i.e., nationalists in the republics—and unscrupulous new businessmen were taking advantage of glasnost and perestroika for their own nefarious ends. In essence, I was being fed the rationale for the State of Emergency Committee's power grab.

Still, by no means all of what the Ministry's apparatchiks told me was bogus. The exploits of the Soviet Union's new mafias had become a staple of new progressive publications like the business/political journal *Kommersant*. The reading public was clamoring for news about them. There were old favorites like the Lubertsy gang, or "Lubers," thuggish young sports enthusiasts from the Moscow suburbs who started in the early 1980s as petty racketeers and graduated to drugs and prostitution. Newer stars included exotic ethnic gangs, like the Ingush and the Moslem Chechens, both from southern Russia. Some of their activities underscored the "cowboy capitalist" character of late perestroika—raids by armed Ingush on gold mines in the Soviet Far East, for instance.

I recall a conversation with a college professor who had her own shadowy business on the side, which involved going to Poland or India on Aeroflot, buying cheap clothes, bribing her way through customs and selling her wares at a huge profit. To a question about the Soviet mafia, she replied: "The Party—that's our mafia." Indeed, in a relatively benign way, this woman was simply getting a piece of what, prior to perestroika, had been monopolized by the Communist nomenklatura: the good life.

The Soviet Mafia, by Arkady Vaksberg, veteran investigative reporter for the weekly newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, bills itself as "a shocking exposé of organized crime in the USSR." This is somewhat misleading; in fact, something like "The Mafia State" would make a better title. Drawing on scores of investigations that he undertook from the Brezhnev "era of stagnation" until the Gorbachev era, Vaksberg portrays the USSR as quite simply the mother of all kleptocracies. He starts from this basic premise: after the Stalin period, during which any remnants of ideological fervor or enthusiasm for "building socialism" had been drowned in seas of blood, the Communist ruling class—the nomenklatura or "partocracy"—devoted itself simply to acquiring *la dolce vita*.

This aim dovetailed with the entrepreneurial impulses that had begun to resurface in the absence of Stalinist terror. "The natural processes going on in the economic sphere began to converge with the interests of the new political class (to use Milovan Djilas's label). Where the newly-emerging Soviet businessman found support from party and state functionaries, both sides flourished." The apparatus of repression was now used by the rulers to maintain their market share: "If separate groups of clever dealers were bold enough to try to operate independently, not sharing with or relying upon the ruling elite, they usually got it in the neck."

And in this convergence of interests the Soviet mafia was born. An interesting aspect of Vaksberg's portrait is that the post-Stalinist Soviet oligarchy comes off looking much like those of various non-ideological Third World kleptocracies—Noriega's Panama, perhaps, or Mobutu's Zaire:

> In the final analysis all of them from top to bottom are human beings with the normal human qualities. All their dangerous and convoluted schemes to expand their power and increase their wealth are not the end but the means. The end they serve is the guaranteeing of a life of ease and maximum self-gratification, a life with nothing denied and every whim satisfied. To this end everything else is subordinated: operations, decisions, every move, no matter how these are "dressed up" ideologically as being for the common good.

In Vaksberg's view, this acquisitiveness was the prime motivation of apparatchiks in all sectors. He cites the confessions of a KGB major, stationed in Beirut, who received a coded request from Moscow Center for ten tins of olive oil; another asked for a "musical potty" for a grandchild. "And," writes Vaksberg, "it was sent: a secret-service operative took this potty which played music when a child peed into it from Beirut to Moscow as a precious trophy."

The venality of it was breathtaking. Nikolai Shcholokov, minister of internal affairs under Brezhnev, is a conspicuous, but by no means isolated, case. The USSR's top cop simply couldn't resist the impulse to loot. During a 1977 visit to the USSR by U.S. Chief Justice Warren Burger, Shcholokov got permission from his boss and pal Leonid to give the visiting dignitary a "happy

(continued on page 66)

Jonas Bernstein covers post-Soviet affairs for Insight.

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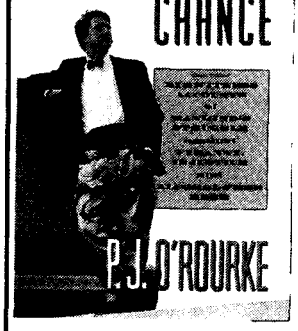

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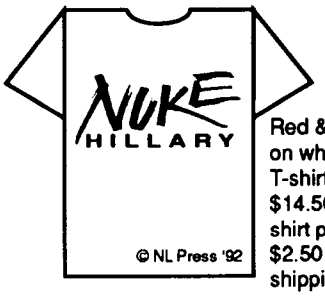

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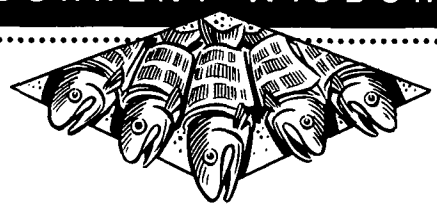

The Great Books Series

An exigent "author's note" appended by Dan Wakefield to his *New York in the Fifties*, lest he stir up the neurotics, which is to say his clientele:

In the 1950s, "Negro" was the accepted term of respect for the minority people who in the next decade would find both beauty and power in the word "black," which before then could have been taken as an insult. In the 1990s, "African American" is for many the preferred designation. In the 1950s, a definition of the word "girl" in my *American College Dictionary* (a standard reference book of the time, published by Harper's) was "2. a young, unmarried woman." That usage was preferred by the young women I knew at the time, though their counterparts today would reject the term as disrespectful, even demeaning, and prefer to be called women.

In using the terms "Negro" and "girl," I have tried to be faithful to the sound and speech of the 1950s. I do not intend any disrespect to current sensibilities by such usage.

[from New York in the Fifties, *by Dan Wakefield, Houghton Mifflin, 355 pages, $24.95]*

Washington Post Book World

Anfractuous bulsh from the very intellectual Miss Diane Johnson whilst reviewing Mary McCarthy's *Intellectual Memoirs*:

Autobiographical memoirs are of course a project of self-presentation, but one quality of Mary McCarthy's truth-telling is that though she judges herself by her own exacting standards, she also does not judge herself by conventional standards. It is this refusal to do so that illuminates, suddenly, for the reader, the triviality or vulgarity of conventional behavior. This is the effect of her book (as it was of her famous story, "The Man in the Brooks Brothers Shirt," which was, as everyone always guessed, autobiographical, and whose protagonist she now reveals: George Black of Sewickley, Pa.). She makes you realize it would be vulgar to conceal that you had slept with a strange man on a train.

[May 17, 1992]

Publishers Weekly

More horror stories from the pre-suicide set—*très chic*:

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Women Speak Out
Edited by Amber Coverdale Sunrall and Dena Taylor, introductions by Andrea Dworkin and Margaret Randall. Crossing, $10.95 ISBN 0-89594-544-4; cloth $20.95 -545-2.

In the essays and poems in this anthology, a follow-up to Anita Hill's testimony at the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, women offer different accounts of sexual harassment. Debra Kuperberg tells how, as a student teacher of youths at a maximum-security facility, she found it easier to cope with the incarcerated students than with some men on the staff. Adriane Fugh-Berman describes the sexism laced through her medical-school training, while Diane Hugs relates how a doctor exploited her paraplegic condition to fondle her paralyzed limbs . . .

[March 30, 1992]

Minneapolis Star Tribune

The straightforward response to the Murphy Brown atrocity by another All-American gal in the yowling columns of a famous northern gazette:

Matriarchy has always been a world-wide cultural alternative. When one considers the unreasonable psychological and physical prerequisites the average American male seeks when looking for a wife (objectification, fixation, conquest, domination, and unrestricted access) in addition to the white standards of beauty enforced by the media, only a small percentage of the American female population may qualify to be "wives."

Those of us who want to be mothers without the physical and psychological burden of man-pleasing need support, education, and equal opportunity rather than "matriarch bashing."

—Keyah Davis
St. Paul

[May 18, 1992]

Boston Globe

Grim evidence that there survives in this historic Republic the mentality of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Watch and Ward Society, and Rockefeller Republicanism:

On hearing that thousands of National Guardsmen were being sent to L.A. and other cities, I was filled with despair. Why isn't the government mobilizing the thousands of men and women in this country who have been working on diversity issues in businesses and educational institutions—multicultural specialists who can help undo the racism that is at the root of this shameful situation.

—Sandy Thompson
Winchester

[May 8, 1992]

New Republic

Kent State and the March on Washington are no more!

The white city girded for violence. In Palms and Mar Vista, barricades went up around gas stations. Later that evening, in one Hollywood Hills canyon near the center of Hollywood, residents enrolled themselves in an ad hoc militia after spying gang members cruising through the canyon's lower stretches. (The police later said the gang-bangers were looking to set a backfire to distract the cops from commercial Hollywood, where looting opportunities were plentiful.) As one resident recounts it, a canyon filled primarily with "film industry and theater people" managed to come up with an amazing array of guns. An uneasy coalition of '60s liberals and survivalists then blocked off the mouth of the canyon with cars, and stood guard there all night (and the following two nights as well), brandishing rifles and bats on the several occasions when cars carrying young black men drove by. For the '60s lefties, it was a profoundly disorienting ordeal. "I always assumed that if I was going to be on the barricades," one resident told me, "I'd be on the other side."

[May 25, 1992]

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New York Times

A combined marriage-and-genealogy report possible only in these times of marital daring:

Valerie Jane Silverman, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet H. Silverman of Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y., was married yesterday to Michael Thomas Flaherty, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Flaherty of Norwell, Mass. Rabbi Beverly Lerner officiated at North House on the campus of Harvard University.

The couple changed their surname yesterday to Flaherman.

[May 25, 1992]

State News

In the student paper of Michigan State University, a stupefacient account of the wonders wrought by a pinhead:

Myths . . . were crushed Wednesday as the Chicago-based HealthWorks Theatre offered its gentle comedic production of "The Wizard of A.I.D.S." . . .

The show, which started as a project from a University of Iowa student, was well performed. The injection of humor makes the lessons accessible and sharp. Musical numbers are changed to reflect a health-conscious edge.

But, like in the movie, there is plenty of camp.

Dorothy informs Uncle Henry and Auntie Em (who think people with AIDS should be quarantined) of human rights, and that AIDS has killed more people than the Vietnam and Korean Wars.

A tornado strike, and she is whisked away into that colorful land of . . .

. . . A.I.D.S. (Aware Individuals Deserving Survival), where knowledge is kept locked away by the Evil Wicked Witch of Unsafe Sex. Decked out in black Converse high-tops, she proceeds to seek revenge for Dorothy's killing of the Wicked Witch of Needle Sharing.

But . . . Glinda points Dorothy on her merry way, and she's on her journey to meet the great and powerful Wizard of A.I.D.S. Perhaps he has a cure to the disease!

She meets up with the Scarecrow (who hits on Dorothy because he doesn't have the "brains" to know about safe sex), the Tin Man (who is taken out of his rusty state with a water-based, nonoxynol-9 lubricant) and the Cowardly Lion (who was getting afraid to touch people for fear of getting AIDS).

The tale ends like the movie. The Wicked Witch is killed (by a human-sized body condom) and Dorothy returns home by chanting "There's no sex like safe sex" over and over.

[May 14, 1992]

Wall Street Journal

Another dirty-minded girl becomes bloody-minded via Art:

In regard to Irving Kristol's March 16 editorial-page essay, "What Shall We Do With the NEA?": What shall we do with Irving Kristol, and the conservative viewpoint that contemporary art has anything to do with obscenity, pornography and blasphemy? (As church and state are separate in the U.S., "blasphemy" is not even a legal term.) Because art can be (and significant 20th-century art has been) made of such unlikely materials as a urinal, a Campbell's Soup can or a plastic crucifix, the panels of the National Endowment for the Arts are "conflict-free"—no individual on the panel will benefit through a grant or an exhibition from the decisions made. I wonder how Mr. Kristol's American Enterprise Institute is funded—do taxpayers ultimately foot the bill for Mr. Kristol's time to ponder?

However, I agree that the most widespread attitude toward the NEA is a "negligent, deferential" one that in my opinion does not recognize the value of controversial art. We need more controversial art, not less, to allow the troubling thoughts in our collective unconscious to bubble to the surface nonviolently, to become part of public debate and, it is hoped, to be resolved. Instead of artists, would Mr. Kristol prefer a country of murderers? If so, I should like to be the one to murder him.

—Martha Wilson
Founder and Director
Franklin Furnace
New York

[April 20, 1992]

Daily News-Miner

(Fairbanks, Alaska)

The dignity of Alaskan journalism, shredded by an unknown wog with a mania for double-entendre:

Fairbanks resident Gregory Spry died February 5, 1992, after a lengthy illness. He was 33.

He is survived by numerous relatives in Kentucky, where he was born, and by his longtime companion Rod Steele of Fairbanks. He had many friends in Fairbanks and San Francisco, where he had lived prior to moving to Alaska in 1979.

Mr. Spry was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, of which he was very proud. He served two tours of the Mediterranean and would often reminisce about his liberty calls in Israel and Greece. After leaving the Navy, he managed a sheep farm in New Zealand.

He will be missed for his easy smile and willingness to bend over for anyone in need. He was a talented cartoonist, volleyball player, and ultralight pilot who will leave a void in many lives.

A private memorial service is pending.

[February 7, 1992]

To borrow a phrase from Mark Twain, the report of Gregory Spry's death was greatly exaggerated Friday in the *Daily News-Miner*.

The *News-Miner* fell victim to a hoax when it printed a phony obituary notice for Spry, 33, who works as a substitute teacher. Details of Spry's life, as related in the obituary, also were incorrect.

Contacted at West Valley High School, Spry said he believes the obituary was submitted to the *News-Miner* by a friend as a practical joke.

"I have a lot of friends with a warped sense of humor," Spry said.

Spry's wife, Lisa Kljaiche, said friends and family members called her at home Friday after reading the paper. Some were quite upset, she said.

[February 9, 1992]

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THE SOVIET MAFIA
(continued from page 61)

memory" of his visit. Twenty thousand rubles were allocated for a gold gavel bedecked with jewels, which was apparently never presented to Burger. Likewise a set of silver wine goblets earmarked for the Angolan minister of internal affairs. Something of an aesthete, Shcholokov cultivated figures in the Soviet art world, and managed to convince some of them to donate works of art "for the raising of the aesthetic level of militia generals." His ministry also launched a campaign against art collectors, accusing them of currency violations and other crimes. Their collections were seized, with many of the works ending up adorning the Minister's dachas.

Shcholokov and his family had a special private shop for their exclusive use; there they could buy imported goods in bulk and resell them at a huge profit on the black market. They had personal servants, hairdressers, masseurs, tailors—all Internal Ministry personnel. Nine flats were requisitioned for his use. "Every morning the minister's wife and daughters would be brought fresh flowers," writes Vaksberg, "paid for by the ministry and shown in the accounts under 'sundry official entertaining.'" When Brezhnev died, the game was up for Shcholokov; he was sacrificed in the token housecleaning that followed. Stripped of his goodies and perks and expelled from the party, Shcholokov committed suicide in 1984.

Not all of the party mafia figures Vaksberg portrays are cut from the same cloth. If Shcholokov was nakedly corrupt—a Soviet Mobutu—the former Azerbaijani Communist boss Geidar Aliev, with his machiavellian instincts, cult of personality and clan-based power structure, was more reminiscent of Saddam Hussein:

> Other bosses also aspired to power—as a means of ensuring heaven on earth for themselves. For Aliev, though, power itself was heaven. It was not the means but the end. And for that reason his external way of life—comparatively speaking, of course—appeared modest. It disarmed any potential criticism of him.

Indeed, Aliev made a name for himself as the "hammer of the mafia"—a fighter against corruption. Yet in 1982, when Brezhnev came down to Baku to pay his respects, Aliev presented the Godfather with a ring.

> On the ring was set one enormous stone symbolizing Brezhnev the Sun King, and around it glittered fifteen smaller stones symbolizing the fifteen union republics like planets orbiting their sun. . . . When he received it, and heard the recitation of the symbolism embodied in it, Brezhnev burst into tears.

This ring cost the Azerbaijanis 226,000 rubles; Brezhnev was also presented with a diamond-studded dagger and his bust in white gold.

These and countless other variations on the "power corrupts" theme enliven Vaksberg's book. Vaksberg seems to think, however, that the mafia has been behind virtually *everything* that has happened in the USSR since Stalin. One could question his contention that the ethnic violence in places like Nagorno-Karabakh or Kazakhstan was the result of intra-mafia power struggles and manipulation. That such factors were involved there can be little doubt. But with the benefit of post-Communist hindsight, we can see that, even with the partocracy weakened, ethnic hatred is thriving.

What *The Soviet Mafia* does, though, is provide a vivid sense of why the apparatchiks of the former Soviet Union, even after the formal dissolution of the CPSU, try to cling to power and thwart the reformers. Quite simply, they don't want to lose the easy life. In some of the ex-republics—in Azerbaijan, Central Asia, and, to a lesser extent, Ukraine—they retain much of their power. In Russia, the struggle continues, with Yeltsin and Co. pitted against the nomenklatura bloc that dominates the Russian legislature and bureaucracy.

And Vaksberg suggests something else. In the penultimate chapter, he speaks about the billions of dollars in foreign aid that were sent to the Soviet Union to bolster Gorbachev: "One can say without fear of contradiction that a large proportion of the goods and money sent by the West to help the impoverished Soviet people fell into mafia hands." Twenty-four billion more have been slated by the West for Russia, even though the legal basis for a market economy has yet to be established, privatization is only just beginning, and much of the bureaucracy is the same as it ever was. As that money begins to flow, one hopes that Nikolai Shcholokov, from the grave, doesn't get the last laugh. ❐

CORRESPONDENCE
(continued from page 14)

mean that a woman who charges rape after talking to or consenting to being alone with a man is blameworthy, shrewish, or undeserving of legal recourse.

Reasonable people can disagree about van den Haag's proposal to curb rape by banning pornography; I'm not sure what I think of it myself. Still, I'm pleased and grateful to see this level-headed view of the issue expressed in a conservative forum. It's always mystified me that the same people who sing the praises of abstinence and sexual restraint can so lightly, even sneeringly, dismiss a woman's right to reject sex with any man who feels he has a reason to expect it. By pointing out that the acquaintance rapist, just like the street rapist, is more interested in humiliation than in pleasure, van den Haag exposes the misogynistic unfairness of this view. I hope his insights move conservatives to reconsider their anti-feminist reflexes on this issue.

—Linda C. Lowenthal
Boston, Massachusetts

School Days

As a recent graduate of the University of California, San Diego, I was pleasantly surprised to see my school reviewed in *TAS* ("A Month in Paradise," by Edward Norden, April 1992). Mr. Norden's description of life at UCSD is accurate, and I was glad to see that it was not stigmatized as a pinko-leftist university. Like any major university, UCSD has its leftist element. Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of students see this minority for what it is—a bunch of irrelevant, loud-mouthed, sixties rejects. . . .

—Timothy Milauskas
UCSD, Class of 1990
Muir College
(Yes, the easy one)
Boston, Massachusetts

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Orthodox Catholics: DON'T DESPAIR!

Anne Roche Muggeridge, daughter-in-law of convert Malcolm Muggeridge, has said in her recent book, *The Desolate City: Revolution in the Catholic Church* (Harper & Row): "Because the integrity of its message has been betrayed, the Catholic Church is in ruins. Yet even now there are converts, of exceptionally high quality, and their number is increasing with the tenure of the present Pope. Catholics watched with a mixture of pity and amusement as the excellent Anglo-Catholic *New Oxford Review* argued and agonized itself into the [Roman] Catholic Church. I know a substantial number of recent converts like this and am much edified by their purity and ardour. Seven of them are my godchildren, and I must confess that some of us, to our shame, earnestly tried to delay them, on the grounds of the growing disorder in the Catholic Church. They forced their way past us anyway, thank God. They come because at the highest level of Catholic teaching, the doctrine of the faith, though much embattled, remains uncompromised and is as fearlessly proclaimed by John Paul II as by Peter, Paul, Ignatius, or Augustine. These new Catholics and the extraordinary Pope to whom they belong are a very present comfort when one is tempted to despair."

Over the last quarter century, the number of converts to Roman Catholicism slowed to a trickle. But now, a new wave of converts is entering the Church. What's more, contrary to the shibboleth that Catholicism is a superstitious religion for the ignorant, an unusually high proportion of the new Catholics consists of writers and intellectuals. Among them, it may be hoped, is another Chesterton, another Maritain, another Newman, another Ronald Knox, another Dorothy Day, another Gerard Manley Hopkins, another Edith Stein – converts all.

The new converts are not attracted to the diluted Catholicism of the Hans Kungs, the Charles Currans, or those who sign ads favoring legal abortion. No, they are attracted by the Catholicism of the ages, the Magisterium, and the inspiring leadership of the current Pope.

The forum for the new generation of converts is the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, a monthly magazine that takes its name from the 19th-century Oxford Movement in England. Today there is a new Oxford Movement afoot in America. Among the converts to Roman Catholicism who have written for the REVIEW are Sheldon Vanauken, John C. Cort, Walker Percy, L. Brent Bozell, Avery Dulles, and Peter Kreeft. But the REVIEW isn't just for converts. Most of our writers are cradle Catholics and a significant minority belongs to various other churches. Amazingly, while the REVIEW is a lightning rod for "papist" pilgrims, it is also ecumenical in spirit. And we cover the full range of issues of concern to today's reflective and believing Christians, including the quest for a more just and compassionate society.

If you want to recapture the excitement of when you first really believed, if you feel inundated by "bad news" about the Church, if you despair of all the moral laxity and doubt and dissension within her portals but seek a remedy for that despair, or if you're searching for a "face" of Catholicism that is spiritually vibrant, solidly prolife, doctrinally sound, and socially engaged, it's time for you to subscribe to the NEW OXFORD REVIEW!

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